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## 1981: One or Several Aesthetics?

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Graduate Program in Theory and Criticism

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## **ABSTRACT**

Gilles Deleuze's monograph on Francis Bacon, *The Logic of Sensation* (1981), proposes a theory of aesthetic experience that prioritizes the material depths of sensation over stable, identifiable forms. Deleuze's key references in *The Logic of Sensation* to playwright Antonin Artaud arouse the suspicion that Artaud's schizophrenic experience of language, wherein words are reduced to phonetic ramblings, illuminates how Deleuze interprets this chaos of sensation in Bacon's art. My work therefore calls back to *The Logic of Sense* (1969) and the first section of his book on *Masochism* (1967) to explore the waves of consistency between Deleuze's understanding of language and the body, which is also to say between literature and painting. Yet while *The Logic of Sensation* may read like an exhaustive theory of art, Deleuze subtly indicates in this text that his system has its limits. Along with the molecular, material depths of sensation, Deleuze alludes to a cosmological, immaterial function of art. He observes this to exist almost exclusively in music and its force of floating time. Rather than turning solely to Plateau 11: Of the Refrain, I also adopt his earlier writings on Proust to explore a Deleuzian musicology. This Proust-music aesthetic schema (which I coin the musical pole) contrasts sharply with that of Bacon-Artaud (the painterly pole). Through an examination of the painterly and musical poles and to what extent the two can be synthesized, my work examines the enthralling disjunction in Deleuze's aesthetics.

## **KEYWORDS**

Gilles Deleuze, aesthetics, painting, hysteria, music, schizophrenia, Francis Bacon, Marcel Proust, time, sensation, depths, heights, molecular, refrain, territory, Antonin Artaud, Pierre Boulez, Olivier Messiaen, spirit, immateriality, modernism

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“Only the signs of art are immaterial.”

## INTRODUCTION

A friend of a friend once claimed that Gilles Deleuze’s *The Logic of Sense* is a treatise on photography. His explanation must have been convincing, for my friend had inscribed these words—in pen—on the flyleaf of his copy. I have not asked for the supporting arguments, mainly because I one day hope to find it out for myself all Socratic-like. Really though, it is a principle of self-discovery I model off 90s hip-hop production. Like a magic trick, a musician need not reveal the samples they use, but can leave it up to the audience to find them out on their own. There are certain legal issues in not declaring your sources, though there is no doubt also beauty in not being told where a vocal chop or drum loop comes from, and having to seek it out for yourself as if on a treasure hunt. It makes sense then that we refer to shopping for old records as “digging.”

My work does not focus on Gilles Deleuze and photography, though I remain deeply inspired by this friend’s formula of *The Logic of Sense* when I claim that *Proust and Signs* is a treatise on music. As with photography, Deleuze never wrote a book on music. We are forced to read between the lines, always in the “middle [*milieu*]” of his thought on this topic.<sup>2</sup> He certainly had plans for a book, and as his biographer François Dosse describes, Deleuze’s late encounter with Pascale Criton spurred an interest in chromatics (microtones and tuning that exceeds twelve intervals an octave), something Deleuze hoped would evolve into an extended study had it not been for his declining health.<sup>3</sup> Like his unfinished book “on the greatness of Marx,” in my mind his musical writings would always remain on the horizon.

And where we must resort to *Anti-Oedipus* to find the clues of Deleuze’s Marxism, when it

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<sup>1</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 39.

<sup>2</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 21.

<sup>3</sup> François Dosse, *Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari: Intersecting Lives*, trans. Deborah Glassman (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 444-5.

comes to music we continually seem to turn to Plateau 11: Of the Refrain from *A Thousand Plateaus*.

But any glance at Félix Guattari's independent work betrays that the main ideas in Plateau 11 were not really Deleuze's contributions. We need to look elsewhere for a Deleuzian musicology, and in the absence of any substantial work written directly on the matter, I resort to adopting his ideas on Proust. It is an aberrant Proust of course, "a child that would be his own offspring, yet monstrous," and hopefully still worthy of adoption.<sup>4</sup> For Deleuze, Proust gets at "a bit of pure time," time freed from measure, and this is precisely what also attracts Deleuze to modernist composers like Olivier Messiaen and Pierre Boulez.<sup>5</sup> There is an intimate connection between how Proust handles speed and slowness—the effect of the world's rhythms on consciousness—and Deleuze's interest in modern music. I thus use *Proust and Signs* as a map to get to a fuller understanding of Deleuze's thought on music. A map, that is, and not a tracing, for "[w]hat distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real."<sup>6</sup>

Yet this is just one side of my project, and as it unfolded what became apparent is that the Proust-music chimera is one beast among many others, a wolf among several perhaps.<sup>7</sup> Deleuze ceaselessly uses the arts to explain one another, and Proust mapping Boulez only grazes the surface of these junctions. Time and again he employs analogies across media—literature explains music, painting explains cinema. It is an important trope running through Deleuze's writing, though not often discussed. Perhaps because it is counterintuitive that Deleuze of all thinkers would draw on analogies, given his metaphysical animosity for them. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze opposes an analogical conception of

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<sup>4</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 6.

<sup>5</sup> Gilles Deleuze, "Making Inaudible Forces Audible," in *Two Regimes of Madness*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (South Pasadena: Semiotext(e), 2007), 157.

<sup>6</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 12.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

being. To paint this picture, I call to mind one of the greatest emissaries for this analogical (equivocal) metaphysics, Saint Thomas Aquinas.

Grounded upon an irreducible difference between finite beings and God, Aquinas inquired into the nature of certain concepts (goodness, justice, knowledge, etc.) that we nevertheless use to describe both entities. The Thomistic model finds its roots in the Aristotelian categorization of identity—any difference (such as species) must refer back to a shared point (genus)—making identity always the priority. In Aquinas’ case, what finite creatures share with God is a resemblance based on cause and effect. God’s goodness, for example, causes ours, despite the fact that when we compare the two we equivocate. Think how sacrilegious it would be to reduce God’s qualities to those of His human analogues—you see Aquinas’ point. Yet this is in a sense what Deleuze wants to do—and not so much to profane the divine, but to elevate *difference* to a positive position (difference in itself, not subordinate to identity). Following Duns Scotus, Spinoza, and Nietzsche, Deleuze outlines the univocity of being: that being is said “in a single and same sense.”<sup>8</sup> Distinct entities are thus distinguished not by some ontological chasm (Aristotle, Aquinas), but rather now by degree (Duns Scotus) and modality (Spinoza).

While Deleuze’s employment of analogies in describing the arts then comes as a surprise, I argue it is in fact incredibly useful: it helps to uncover a key function of the Body without Organs. As Deleuze articulates the ways in which music renders inaudible forces audible and painting makes visible the invisible, as music puts “an ear in the stomach” and painting gives us the sense of touch in our eyes, we feel ourselves moving beyond and below the organized body.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 36.

<sup>9</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 45.

As Deleuze develops connections across sense experience and likewise across the works of distinct artists (such as Proust and Boulez), what we come to appreciate is that the networks created are not neutral—some succeed and others come up against (and are pedagogically meant to show) a limit. The rhizome’s powers of connection, infinite nodes that can link up at any stage, are not always actualized.

My work therefore explores two sets of connections—the first between surrealist-impressionist painter Francis Bacon and playwright Antonin Artaud, the second between Proust, Boulez, and Messiaen. However, between these constellations there is also an impasse. The model of aesthetics illustrated by Deleuze’s work on Francis Bacon is incompatible with that of Proust and music. Unforgettably, Deleuze interrupts his monograph on Bacon, *The Logic of Sensation*, to declare that “music begins where painting ends, and this is what is meant when one speaks of the superiority of music. It is lodged on lines of flight that pass through bodies, but which find their consistency elsewhere, whereas painting is lodged farther up, where the body escapes from itself.”<sup>10</sup> My first chapter addresses this rift, while more generally exploring what I have coined the painterly pole of Deleuze’s aesthetics. Centred around Deleuze’s claim that in Bacon’s paintings “hysteria becomes art . . . [and] color is a direct action on the nervous system,” I explore the depths of sensation, the molecular forces, at work in this art form.<sup>11</sup> Throughout my study, I also explain a critical distinction Deleuze makes between the hysteria of painting and what he calls the “galloping schizophrenia” of music.<sup>12</sup>

Moreover, to chart the depths of sensation, I continually turn, as Deleuze himself does, to his earlier explorations into the philosophy of language. Primarily, I build off of his

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 52-3.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

work on Masoch and Sade, where we find a striking similarity to his description of Bacon. In *Masochism: Coldness and Cruelty*, Deleuze writes that “it seems that, for Masoch as for Sade, language assumes its full value in acting directly on the senses [*sur la sensualité*].”<sup>13</sup> Note how closely this aligns to Bacon’s “color [a]s a direct action on the nervous system.”<sup>14</sup> Similarly in *The Logic of Sense*, for Artaud language is reduced to purely phonetic elements: “clappings, crackings, gnashings, cracklings, explosions, the shattered sounds of internal objects, and also the inarticulate howls-breaths [*cris-souffles*] of the body without organs.”<sup>15</sup> Artaud is the key conceptual persona informing the painterly pole, and in Chapter I we explore both Bacon and Artaud, exemplars of the intersection of painting and literature.

In Chapter II, I ask whether it is possible to include Proust within this model of aesthetics, which often tempts us with a grand narrative for understanding all experiences and functions of art. The pre-conceptual realm of sensation, how art produces the new, and what it says about human and animal creation, all seems sufficiently addressed in *The Logic of Sensation*. First supposing that there is an alternative aesthetic schema for Proust and music, we examine how Deleuze’s thought on painting and music communicate with one another. Do they in fact speak in one and the same sense, or must Deleuze resort to analogies given their radical difference? Ultimately, I conclude that the immaterial (spiritual) forces in Proust—time, rhythm, and perception—are incompatible with the material depths in Bacon. There then arises the need to explain the musical pole of Deleuze’s aesthetics, and this is my task primarily in Chapter III. Making use of ideas found in *Proust and Signs* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, I outline the intimate connection between Proust and music and its repulsion from the painterly pole. Following Ronald Bogue’s theory that “[i]n music, Deleuze finds the key

<sup>13</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Masochism: Coldness and Cruelty*, trans. Jean McNeil and Aude Willam (New York: Zone Books, 2006), 17.

<sup>14</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 53.

<sup>15</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantin V. Boundas, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 193.

to an understanding of art's relation to the natural world . . . [and] regards painting as the paradigmatic art of sensation, and hence as the medium that most fully discloses the inner dimension of aesthetic experience," I distinguish the molecular from the cosmological as two divergent aesthetic movements, irreducible yet indispensable.<sup>16</sup>

As part of this project, I situate these two aesthetic poles within the greater art-historical tradition. It is important to appreciate Deleuze's indebtedness to elements of phenomenology and impressionism, including the theory and practice of Erwin Straus, Henri Maldiney, and Paul Cézanne. These figures arise in Chapter I. As for his sources on the musical pole, save for Messiaen and Boulez who are at once case studies of and sources for Deleuze's theory, one must also include Friedrich Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*, specifically the distinction between the Apollonian and the Dionysian. Chapter III explores these influences for the musical pole. The systems Deleuze inherits and reprises illuminate the fundamental properties and distinctions between the painterly and musical pole.

It is not enough, however, simply to describe their differences. As already mentioned, Deleuze insists on the "superiority of music."<sup>17</sup> My conclusion therefore weighs the implications of this hierarchy and, following Peter Hallward's idea that insofar as the immateriality of music resembles a kind of "pure thought," namely the virtual potential in thinking, it achieves an aesthetic production unmatched by the other arts. Revisiting *Proust and Signs*, I examine the concept of the immaterial (spiritual) in Deleuze's aesthetics and its ties to a philosophy of the virtual. In sum, I examine the two poles of Deleuze's aesthetics, the possibility of integrating one into the other (with Proust as a limit case of the Baconian model), and the diverse ways in which aesthetic media analogically explain and are explained by other art forms.

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<sup>16</sup> Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 2.

<sup>17</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 47.

*“And who suffered more from judgment in its harshest form, the terror of psychiatric expertise, than Artaud-Van Gogh?”<sup>1</sup>*

## **CHAPTER I**

~ ANTONIN ARTAUD, A PANORAMIC ~

Between *The Logic of Sense* (1969) and *The Logic of Sensation* (1981) one finds the conceptual trajectory of the Body without Organs, and, more generally, the bulk of Deleuze’s critical-clinical engagement with French dramatist Antonin Artaud. First referenced in the Thirteenth Series of “the Schizophrenic and the Little Girl,” Artaud’s Body without Organs is employed by Deleuze to chart what he calls the depths of the body. Of particular interest to Deleuze during these younger years is the status of language, signs, and signification. At large, *The Logic of Sense* is the closest Deleuze comes to a philosophy of language, and though its genesis is of interest to him, so too is the possibility of its disintegration, which is to say the withdrawal of sense back into the chaotic ramblings of a body devoid of any language.

In alignment with Freudian psychoanalysis, Deleuze builds on Melanie Klein’s claim that the child’s original experience of undifferentiated noise eventually becomes the voice—something not yet a language, but which sets the stage for things other than just bodies and corporeal clamours.<sup>2</sup> But as one moves down from the Ideational heights to the purely phonetic depths, a fall of language occurs wherein words are no longer separated from objects of reference. The voice of the heights becomes a barrage of noise that, following Artaud, Deleuze describes as emitting a force that acts directly on the body. Upon introducing this schizophrenic, intensely physical, mode of language, Deleuze echoes a claim inaugurated in *Masochism: Coldness and Cruelty* (1967) about the effect any language can have

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<sup>1</sup> Gilles Deleuze, “To Have Done with Judgment,” in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 126.

<sup>2</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantin V. Boundas, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 193-95.



on the body. There he writes, “it seems that, for Masoch as for Sade, language assumes its full value in acting directly on the senses [*sur la sensualité*].”<sup>3</sup> This conception of language foreshadows Deleuze’s aesthetic turn in the 1980s. In fact, a language that attacks the body is reborn in *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* under the umbrella of a transformed aesthetic implication (fig. 1, fig. 2).<sup>4</sup> Francis Bacon’s paintings have a force that acts on the nervous system, and the weight Deleuze gives to this statement marks a move his philosophy undergoes from a study of language *and* the body (Masoch, Carroll) to a language *of* the body (Artaud, Bacon), which in many ways is to say a path from sense to sensation.



Figure One. Oil on canvas, *Painting*, Francis Bacon, 1946, © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved. DACS / SOCAN (2018).

<sup>3</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Masochism: Coldness and Cruelty*, trans. Jean McNeil and Aude Willam (New York: Zone Books, 2006), 17.

<sup>4</sup> An umbrella, that is, in light of the recurrence of this prop in Bacon’s work.



Figure Two. Oil on canvas, *Triptych—Studies of the Human Body*, Francis Bacon, 1970, © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved. DACS / SOCAN (2018).

There are a number of elements in need of explication to develop how *The Logic of Sensation* establishes a form of nondiscursive language that Deleuze was already outlining in *The Logic of Sense*, and which paves the way for his aesthetics of painting. By way of Artaud's schizophrenic writing and the role he plays as a conceptual persona in Deleuze's corpus, I argue, one can trace the cohesion and evolution of Deleuze's ideas on representation and the way the two series of bodies and language interact. This corporeal conception of language also prefigures an important role it will have after his collaboration with Félix Guattari. By first treating *The Logic of Sensation* with broad strokes and explaining, naturally by way of Bacon's paintings, Deleuze's key concepts in this work, we shall begin to see the role Artaud plays in this text. Following this, *The Logic of Sense* will be reintroduced so as to notice how Artaud's persona unfolds from this early work, onward until its painterly form in *Sensation*.

How the Body without Organs is replaced by the concept of the Figure in the latter text will also be addressed. I shall defend Deleuze's rationale for substituting Artaud's term,

or at the least committing a kind of “buggery” to it,<sup>5</sup> by pointing to the need for Deleuze to diverge from Artaud’s notions of the self and ego that still remain in his original conception of the Body without Organs.

The depths, in Artaud’s case, are still too personal for Deleuze. The way the self inheres in Artaud’s depths is central to Deleuze’s interpretation in *The Logic of Sense*. However, following his collaboration with Guattari and as the concept of the Body without Organs will arise in relation to aesthetics and sensation, Deleuze, as it were, deforms or remoulds Artaud in hopes of reaching a logic below the individual, a logic of presubjective forces, the likes of which Deleuze defines as the very goal of aesthetics. Painting, for Deleuze, battles with impersonal molecular forces—corpuscles of the nonhuman and inorganic.

~ BODILY SIGNS ~

As we shall encounter in the next two chapters, when it comes to the role of the bodily sign in Deleuze’s writing between *Proust and Signs* (1964) and *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980) what diverges by the time he writes *The Logic of Sensation* is a certain recreation of the sign’s status of affection. The sign, as we find in Bacon and Deleuze’s aesthetics in general, is something that can be felt through the material vibrations it creates upon the body. Language is not something that removes us from the world; its ideas and concepts are still strings that pull on our body. Bearing in mind a distinction Deleuze makes in *The Logic of Sense* between, on the one hand, eating, and, on the other, speaking, Deleuze is clearly entertaining the zone of indiscernibility between the two.<sup>6</sup> What would it mean to feel concepts? For now, I’ll let my reader chew on this thought. There is one thing, however, I

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<sup>5</sup> Gilles Deleuze, “Letter to a Harsh Critic,” in *Negotiations, 1972-1990* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 6.

<sup>6</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 186.

shall lay bare before you: this indiscernibility between eating and speaking adds an interesting layer to Deleuze's fascination with how Bacon paints the mouth, which, after all, is the site (erogenous zone we might say) at which eating becomes speaking (fig. 3, fig. 4).



Figure Three. Oil on canvas, *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion*, Francis Bacon, 1944, © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved. DACS / SOCAN (2018).



Figure Four. Oil and sand on canvas, *Study for a Head*, Francis Bacon, 1952, © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved. DACS / SOCAN (2018).

In this renewed conception of the sign and of language, Deleuze is building on a specific lineage of art history that emerges from Erwin Straus's *The Primary World of the Senses* (1963), as well as the theory and practice of Henri Maldiney, Paul Cézanne, Vincent van Gogh, and Paul Klee. Each of these figures will arise throughout this chapter, and what connects all of them is the Deleuzian task of establishing the genetic principles of sensation and how aesthetics plays a key role in revealing this process. In the words of Klee, the task of aesthetics is “not to render the visible, but to render visible.”<sup>7</sup> As I examine in my conclusion, art equally so reveals much about the production of the new and the act of creation. What we must also grapple with, though, is how some art forms (in Deleuze's mind, music) can move closer to the potential of pure thought. Philosophical thought, for Deleuze, immerses itself far more in the virtual than the actual (the material world that art subsists in), and it remains the case that certain works of art can launch us more into the virtual while others fall short.<sup>8</sup>

Paul Klee's statement repeats itself in many forms throughout the family of thinkers above. Just as Cézanne sought to “*paint the sensation*,” Bacon intended to “*record the fact*.”<sup>9</sup> Van Gogh has his own form of bringing to the surface imperceptible forces of the sunflower, and so do Straus and Maldiney from a more theoretical perspective. Deleuze, rightly so, brings each of these declarations into a single aesthetic manifesto, and in so doing gestures to his greater intention of directing the artist and spectator (although Deleuze prefers the word “attendant” or “witness”<sup>10</sup>) to a plane below the level of the individual, thus opening up a nonorganic state where self and world amalgamate. There, one experiences the sign, a pure

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<sup>7</sup> Paul Klee, quoted in Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 48.

<sup>8</sup> Thinking of it as a “fall” will prove important, for Deleuze frequently refers to the depths of sensation in Bacon's work as such.

<sup>9</sup> Paul Cézanne and Francis Bacon, quoted in Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 32.

<sup>10</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 62-70.



sign, beyond the dogmatic image of thought, which in art exists as representation, as narrative, and above all else as cliché. They are the three aesthetic powers of negation rather than affirmation.

Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation* focuses on the imperceptible forces that congregate on Francis Bacon's canvas, and these include powers such as gravity (fig. 5), time passed by (fig. 6), cramps (fig. 7) and inner contortions of the body (fig. 8).



Figure Five. Oil and sand on canvas, *Lying Figure in a Mirror*, Francis Bacon, 1971, © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved. DACS / SOCAN (2018).



Figure Six. Oil on canvas, *Two Seated Figures*, Francis Bacon, 1979, © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved. DACS / SOCAN (2018).



Figure Seven. Oil and dry transfer lettering on canvas, *Figure at a Washbasin*, Francis Bacon, 1976, © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved. DACS / SOCAN (2018).

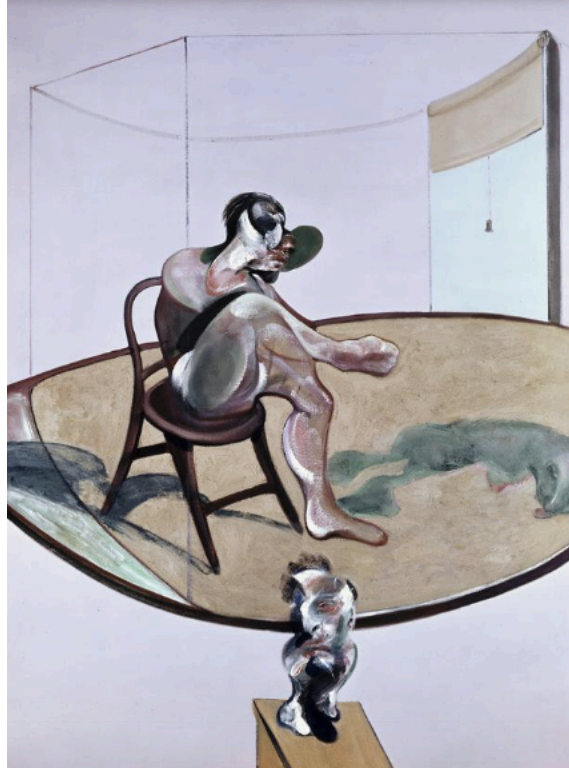


Figure Eight. Oil on canvas, *Two Studies of George Dyer with Dog*, Francis Bacon, 1968, © The Estate of Francis Bacon All rights reserved. DACS / SOCAN (2018).

Recalling *Proust and Signs*, one thinks of how Marcel Proust captured several imperceptibles: “time wasted, time lost, time rediscovered, and time regained.”<sup>11</sup> In Bacon’s case, these invisible forces go hand-in-hand with the erasure or disintegration of the organic (organized) body, and in these instances Deleuze emphasizes the way in which we encounter an image of the Body without Organs. Bacon, however, is not alone in this feat. As Deleuze and Guattari argue in *What is Philosophy?* (1991) the role of any work of art is to capture and preserve “*a bloc of sensation . . . a compound of percepts and affects*,” a kind of slice of chaos or lightning in a bottle.<sup>12</sup> What the artist captures is something unique to her form, some invisible affect that works on the body but that our eyes and common language gloss over.

<sup>11</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000, 87.

<sup>12</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia, 1994), 164.



Deleuze cites Cézanne, whose paintings present the great rhythm of deep time expressed by mountains as they fold, grow, and experience shifting climates (fig. 9), and apples as they germinate and receive their particular redness and texture (fig. 10).



Figure Nine. Oil on canvas, *Mont Sainte-Victoire*, Paul Cézanne, 1904.



Figure Ten. Oil on canvas, *Apples*, Paul Cézanne, 1878.

In such rhythms, one can hazard a guess why Deleuze showed such interest in molecular biology and epigenetics. Biology for its attention to minute forces, epigenetics for how it tracks the speeds and slowness of gene development and how an organism evolves given its environment. Think of the way locusts are predominantly solitary creatures quite similar to grasshoppers, but when plants and water become available and they congregate, they turn into gregarious creatures and are spurred into a rapid change of gene expression, for example, growing wings. Deleuze likens painting to charting these changes in speed and the ability to pick up on imperceptible forces.<sup>13</sup> But it is not always about finding such forces. For example, what is remarkable about van Gogh is that he can be accredited with *creating* forces of the sunflower (fig. 11).



Figure Eleven. Oil on canvas, *Sunflowers*, Vincent van Gogh, 1889.

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<sup>13</sup> As Chapter III shows, painting comes nowhere near how music can track such speeds.

Van Gogh, says Deleuze, “invented unknown forces, the unheard-of-force of a sunflower seed,” although each “recomposition” of the sunflower necessarily entails a kind of “decomposition” or erasure of its prior form.<sup>14</sup> Art overwrites the actualized world, and the painter’s inventions are much like the philosopher tasked with creating new concepts.<sup>15</sup> The painter and the philosopher perform a dual kind of creation meant to spark a new image of thought. As my conclusion meditates on, in Deleuze’s thinking it seems to be the case that some art (and, more provocatively, art forms) move closer to this philosopher-creator, who enters into the virtual realm by way of pure thought. As the end of this chapter develops, and as I continue to revisit throughout my work, it is music that Deleuze considers capable of leaving the material body and reaching out to the raw potential of pure thought in ways painting cannot. At this stage, however, I ask my reader simply to prepare to see the dichotomy between how Deleuze describes painting and music.

While still focused on painting, however, note how Deleuze’s *Logic of Sensation* achieves the pairing of philosophical concepts with those affects and bodily languages an artist invents or captures on the canvas.<sup>16</sup> As we shall see, it is not the case that music monopolizes the virtual, though for Deleuze the processes of music (time, rhythm, interval) match strongly with the immateriality of thinking. Deleuze is infamous for these kinds of “pairings.” We might call *A Thousand Plateaus*, for example, the pairing of philosophical concepts with modern science, providing the metaphysics adequate for ideas of non-linear mathematics, complexity theory, the irreversibility of time, and so on (though this summary

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<sup>14</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 49.

<sup>15</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 15-34.

<sup>16</sup> While there may be a hierarchy in Deleuze’s aesthetics at reaching the virtual, this is not to say painting is devoid of a connection to it. Remember that it is all a matter of degree—painting always has something that connects to the virtual, despite Deleuze seeing it as a far more carnal, material, actualized art.

does not even glaze the surface of that rhizomatic work).<sup>17</sup> But with any pairing, of course, not every force is neutral; there are always stronger or weaker connections. For this reason, at the end of Chapter III we examine the particular resonances Deleuze sees between literature and painting as aesthetic media, and the lack thereof between painting and music. Moreover, as I shall focus on in this chapter and Chapter III, time and again Deleuze effectively uses the arts to explain one another, especially in *The Logic of Sensation*. Painting and literature are effectively drawn on to explain the other. Yet prior to focusing on this trope in Deleuze's aesthetics, let us reflect on the role of the artist and creation. That is, before explaining how art disciplines interact, we must see how they act in solitude.

~ THE ARTIST AT WORK ~

One of the central aims of *The Logic of Sensation* is to explain the process an artist must go through in capturing the nonorganic forces of the world, and thus finding a way of creating images that act, in a hysteric sense, directly on the body. For reasons we shall get into, Deleuze opts to call this process *hysteria* (rather than *schizophrenia*) in *The Logic of Sensation*, and this proves to be an indispensable distinction in understanding the function of painting versus music (the latter which according to Deleuze takes on a “galloping schizophrenia” not as tethered to the body like painting).<sup>18</sup> Nonetheless, the creator as painter is not wholly tied to the actualized material world. Deleuze claims that artists like Bacon come upon a reservoir of clichés, concepts, representations, and figurations that must be battled against and bypassed at a subterranean level of sensation (depth). Rather than through the virtual power of thought—the Ideational heights—the painter goes deeper into

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<sup>17</sup> While they in turn characterize Bergson with the “profound desire” to catch philosophy up to science (*Cinema 1*, 60), and credit him with major discoveries in consciousness and time, Deleuze and Guattari, especially in *A Thousand Plateaus*, are also attempting to synthesize philosophy and modern science.

<sup>18</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 47.



matter. In encountering the pre-givens of the world that must be combatted, Deleuze writes the following of the artist:

It is a mistake to think that the painter works on a white surface. The figurative belief follows from this mistake. If the painter were before a white surface, he could reproduce on it an external object functioning as a model, but such is not the case. The painter has many things in his head, or around him, or in his studio. Now everything he has in his head or around him is already in the canvas, more or less virtually, more or less actually, before he begins his work.<sup>19</sup>

While this quote has become somewhat of a cliché in Deleuze scholarship, it is truly an undeniable fact of artistic process.<sup>20</sup> There are many signs that cut off the artist's ability to capture a pure sensation. Of all these pre-existing signs that must be dismantled, the face is one of the main antagonists. (fig. 12, fig. 13).

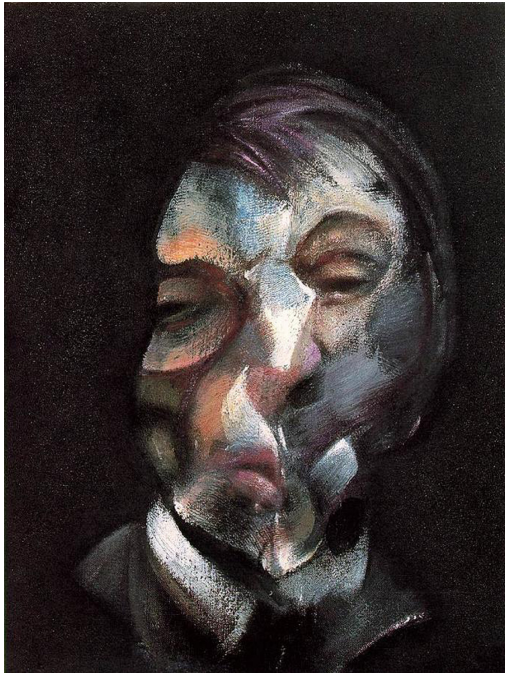


Figure Twelve. Oil on canvas, *Self Portrait*, Francis Bacon, 1971, © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved. DACS / SOCAN (2018).

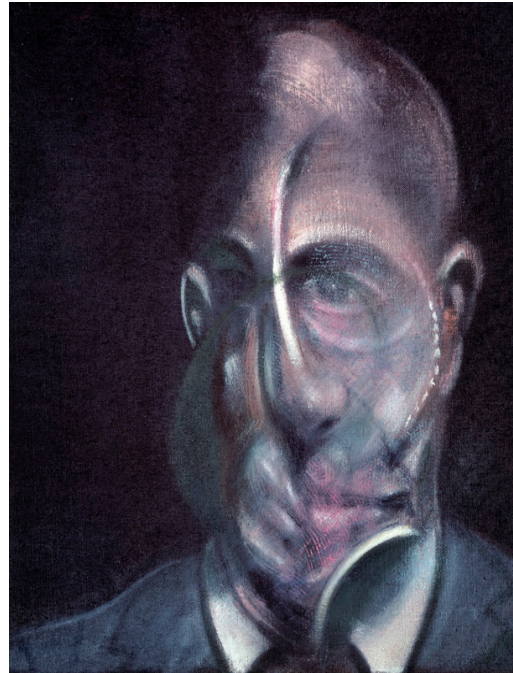


Figure Thirteen. Oil on canvas, *Portrait of Michel Leiris*, Francis Bacon, 1976, © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved. DACS / SOCAN (2018).

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

<sup>20</sup> What many do not know, however, is that the line really comes from painter, Gérard Fromanger, a close friend of Deleuze. Fromanger recalls telling Deleuze, “I told him, ‘you see it as blank, but in fact it’s black.’ And his reaction was, ‘Ah, fantastic! It’s black, black with what?’ and I answered, ‘It’s black with everything every painter has painted before me,’ and he said, ‘So it’s not about blackening the canvas but about whitening it.’” (Gérard Fromanger, quoted in Dosse, *Intersecting Lives*, 441).

As we shall see in Chapter II, how applicable the breadth of Deleuze's *Logic of Sensation* is—how well it can account for the function of all art and not just painting—will have to confront how artists construct and deconstruct faces. By exploring Deleuze's commentary on Marcel Proust, who according to Deleuze constructs faces everywhere, we begin to realize that Deleuze's aesthetics has two irreconcilable poles. Francis Bacon and Marcel Proust stand sentinel at the two sides.

When I refer to faces and faciality, this does not necessarily mean a simple human visage. Recalling Deleuze and Guattari's critique of the face from an ethico-political perspective (and contra-Levinas) in *A Thousand Plateaus*, the face signifies any form of overcoded identity and alterity.<sup>21</sup> The face is a surface effect, not a universal sign that commands anything from us, and the face of the other in Levinas's work tempts us to forget this.<sup>22</sup> For Deleuze and Guattari, whatever the ethical call of the other we are responsible for may be, reaching it involves dismantling our imperialisms of the face—commonly hierarchized around the white, male face of Christ. It helps to remember that, historically, Jesus almost certainly was not white, and this is one element of Nietzschean genealogy and political resistance Deleuze and Guattari exhibit. Yet in *The Logic of Sensation* the influence is just as much Artaud who was antithetical to a topology of the body where everything assembled around and was subordinated by one organ or part (say, the face).

Bacon's paintings embark on a deterritorialization of the face, and the role this has in Deleuze's overall concern with regimes of signs is that he emphatically states that the history of art is a history of the process of facialization. He is clear that the face is not a matter that concerns only figurative or representative works of art like portraiture; rather, all painting

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<sup>21</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 167-91.

<sup>22</sup> Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991), 187-203.

implies the face and depicts it amid a system centralized by this organ. Deleuze and Guattari unmask the majoritarian presuppositions of faciality, which is to say how recognition (and here let us interpret it in the sense of a Levinasian politics of the gaze) is always already wrapped up in a process of selection: what counts as a face, whether the subject of our gaze abides by the norm, and so on. Aesthetics disrupts and indeed has the power to expose the genesis of representation, calling forth signs that cannot be mitigated by our pre-existing formulae of recognition. One could argue that for this reason Bacon's paintings often appear as gross or cruel; they stutter and deform, getting their energy from a chthonic realm below organization—and for this reason does Bacon paint the head and not the face. Unlike the face, the head is without structure; the distinction here is schematically the same as the opposition between bone and flesh also in *The Logic of Sensation*. Referring to Bacon's *Three Figures and a Portrait* (fig. 14), and Bacon's inspiration for this in how Edgar Degas paints the woman's spine in *After the Bath* (fig. 15), Deleuze writes, "what achieves this tension [between flesh and bone] in the painting is, precisely, *meat*, through the splendor of its colors. Meat is the state of the body in which flesh and bone confront each other locally rather than being composed structurally."<sup>23</sup> All these arguments relate to a move away from a body as something structured, also known as the "organism" as opposed to the Body without Organs.<sup>24</sup> This organism, as organized, has ties to the parasitism of representation and the concepts that impinge on how one is affected by the work of art.

What Bacon accomplishes is a series of undecidable signs, each which opens up a space for sensations to hit the viewer directly and unfiltered by concepts. These signs

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<sup>23</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 20-1.

<sup>24</sup> "The organs distribute themselves on the BwO, but they distribute themselves independently of the form of the organism; forms become contingent, organs are no longer anything more than intensities that are produced, flows, thresholds, and gradients. 'A' stomach, 'an' eye, 'a' mouth: the indefinite article does not lack anything; it is not indeterminate or undifferentiated, but expresses the pure determination of intensity, intensive difference" (Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 164).

Deleuze calls the zone of indiscernibility and in Bacon the primary undecidable is between the human and the animal. The mutations that Bacon's figures undergo do not depict a movement from the human to the animal, but rather seek to enter into the common traits that demonstrate the very instability of our concepts and linguistic barriers, especially the primacy of becoming over being, difference over identity.



Figure Fourteen. Oil, pastel, alkyd paint, and sand on canvas, *Three Figures and a Portrait*, Francis Bacon, 1975, © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved. DACS / SOCAN (2018).



Figure Fifteen. Oil on canvas, *After the Bath*, Edgar Degas, c. 1895.



In the words of Lyotard, whose *Discourse, Figure* (1971) influences one of Deleuze's terms in *The Logic of Sensation*, painting seeks to capture the Figure without figuration. As summarized by Ronald Bogue, in *Discourse, Figure* Lyotard's primary opponent is structuralism's "textualization of the world and [Lyotard wants] to insist [instead] that the visual constitutes a domain unassailable within codes and regulated oppositions."<sup>25</sup> He hopes to replace it with a kind of sign that cannot be codified in the structures of, for instance, binary linguistic categories. In *The Logic of Sense*, for example, Deleuze explores a more positive (rather than differential) idea of the sign. There, signifier and signified are complementary but nevertheless distinct series: the signifier as "*empty place*" and the signified as "*occupant without a place*."<sup>26</sup> As Bogue continues: "To the extent that the visual is recognized, comprehended, and assimilated within a rational order . . . its truth is lost, for it is thereby coded, made 'readable' and textualized. Its truth is only revealed in 'the event,' which 'presents itself as a fall, as a sliding and an error.'"<sup>27</sup> This concept of the fall will also inform Deleuze's definition of sensation in his work on Francis Bacon. Along with Lyotard, let us return to Straus, Maldiney, and the quasi-phenomenological tradition that Deleuze is equally drawing on in his aesthetics.

~ ART-HISTORICAL PREDECESSORS ~

Erwin Straus's work can be captured in a distinction he makes between geography and landscape as two distinct modes of perception. Perception as geographical can be understood as viewing the world from a fixed and removed vantage point. In contrast, the view from a landscape is one that shifts with the spectator. What is also valuable is that the landscape grants us the capacity to get lost in it—something that cannot be attained from the

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<sup>25</sup> Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 113.

<sup>26</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 41.

<sup>27</sup> Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, 113.

sober outside offered by the geographic mode. As “Cézanne’s enigma” goes, one must create a being of sensation where “Man is absent from but entirely within the landscape.”<sup>28</sup> What will resonate above all else with Deleuze’s aesthetics is how the landscape, with its constant movement and lack of an ideal vantage point, pivots perspective away from a representation of fixed objects and beyond the classic distinction between subject and object. There are three rhythms at work in the genesis of representation and it should be noted that Deleuze attaches each of these to one of three elements at work in Bacon’s triptychs. These three rhythms are (i) the attendant-witness; (ii) a diastolic enclosure of sensation into a discernible object; and (iii) a systolic event that captures the dissolution of these shapes.<sup>29</sup> Like blood being pumped to the heart, forms are filled and emptied on Bacon’s canvas, and the fine balance he strikes between the two is what Deleuze finds so compelling. It is vital for the work of art to express the cohabitation of these forces, and the shortcomings of certain forms of modern art that lean toward abstraction or expressionism lie in how they overemphasize one of these rhythms—usually (ii) or (iii).

Given that the following chapters of my work take up the musical pole of Deleuze’s aesthetics and how it differs radically from painting, it is interesting to reflect on how similar the rhythmic triunes in Bacon’s triptychs are to how Deleuze and Guattari explain (the musical concepts of) territories, the cosmos, and the refrain in *A Thousand Plateaus*. As Chapter II unpacks, there are numerous moments like this where the irreconcilability of painting and music seems to begin resolving itself. The ultimate realization in Chapter II, however, is that there always remains an asymptote between the function of painting and music no matter how close they may come at times. More often than not, Bacon stands as

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<sup>28</sup> Paul Cézanne, quoted in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 169.

<sup>29</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 64-5.

the antithesis of music, sometimes even framed as pitiable compared to “the superiority of music.”<sup>30</sup> It gives a whole new meaning to Bacon’s injunction to “pity the meat!”<sup>31</sup> While it would take much to forget the merits of painting—how it taps into molecular forces and erases the world’s worn-out forms—Deleuze does not hesitate to note when painting takes on a musical quality, and thus reaches beyond its material limitations. This is how Deleuze explains Bacon’s exceptional<sup>32</sup> musical instant, this time referring to his *Triptych, August 1972* (fig 16):

If the attendant in the center is furnished with elongations and a well-defined mauve oval, we find a diminished torso in the Figure on the left, since a whole portion of it is missing, while the torso on the right is in the process of being built up, half of it having already been added . . . Correlatively, the mauve oval in the center changes status, turning into a pink pool lying next to the chair, in the left panel, and a red discharge from the leg, in the right panel. In this way, Bacon uses mutilations and prostheses in a game of added and subtracted values. It is like a collection of hysterical “sleepings” and “awakenings” affecting the diverse parts of a body. *But it is above all one of Bacon’s most profoundly musical paintings* [my emphasis].<sup>33</sup>



Figure Sixteen. Oil and sand on canvas *Triptych, August 1972*, Francis Bacon, 1972, © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved. DACS / SOCAN (2018).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>32</sup> In both senses of the word: unusual and unusually good.

<sup>33</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 66.

The combination of hysteric sensations produces a rhythm that points beyond the actualized world and this is what is so musical about it in Deleuze's mind. But we must not forget how attached these hysterical bodies are to the material plane in ways music is not. Sensation, after all, is a fall where "the flesh descends from the bones, the body descends from the arms and the raised thighs."<sup>34</sup> Music, in contrast, is an ascent. How it moves away from the molecular upward to the rhythms of territories and the cosmos will be the focus of Chapter III.

Moving beyond Straus and the descriptions of sensation offered above, Henri Maldiney explains what this realm of sensation below the organized subject must feel like. At this level, Being is but a *Mitwelt* with no boundaries between the world and us. In a Strausian sense, this means that our engagement with the world disassembles our sense of subjectivity; it is a moment of radical connection where the 'I' is suspended. From this disintegration, we begin to see why Bacon describes his paintings as "matter[s] of fact" or the recording of facts.<sup>35</sup> His mission is to get beyond the subject and this involves a radical focus on the objectivity (the object- and not subject-focused aspect of sensation). What Deleuze therefore reads Bacon as inheriting is a deep recognition for how art should be about the immediacy of sensation and that, to gain this state, that is to capture this force, art needs to fight against forms that are narrative or representational. The figurative must become the figural. Art must be made into pure images.

Several dangers come with art that seeks to be representational, though the ones Deleuze focuses on are the cliché and the subordination of the eye to a model of recognition which does not allow the possibility for an immediate, pure sensation. There then arises in *The Logic of Sensation* the following question: Bacon says, "It is a very, very close and difficult

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 128-9.

thing to know why some paint comes across directly onto the nervous system and other paint tells the story in a long diatribe through the brain.”<sup>36</sup> There are two major attempts by modern painting to move beyond representation and these, as mentioned earlier, are figural/expressionist and abstract art. For expressionist art, Jackson Pollock stands as the poster boy. His work, along with abstract expressionists *en masse*, signifies a rejection of material forms. In their place, emerge what Deleuze calls the “manual” aspect of painting—that is, the return of an autonomous matter on the canvas that he names manual chaos.<sup>37</sup>

Deleuze is sympathetic to their project insofar as it seeks to move beyond the duality of matter and form, substituting it for the intensities and forces at work in the world that our minds selectively recognize, turn into stale identities, and deny the vital possibilities inherent in becoming. Deleuze’s hesitance in committing himself to the mode of expression characterized by expressionist art is that it plunges too deeply into chaos. Likewise, on the other end of the spectrum of modern art we find abstractionists such as Piet Mondrian (fig. 17) and Wassily Kandinsky (fig. 18). Unlike the manual traits of Pollock, abstractionists reintroduce form (lines and shape) and do so under the authority of an optical code. Ultimately, Deleuze’s claim is that this art manages to be too organized; there is still a subordination of the body to the eye based on figures, no matter how minimalist, on the canvas. What Deleuze searches for is a haptic perception that will restore sensation and becoming (in other words, the becoming-hand of the eye), which we shall get into later. In an Aristotelian fashion, Deleuze seeks a golden mean between expression and abstraction and finds it in Bacon.

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<sup>36</sup> Francis Bacon, quoted in David Sylvester, *The Brutality of Fact: Interviews with Francis Bacon, 1962-1979* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 18.

<sup>37</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 85.

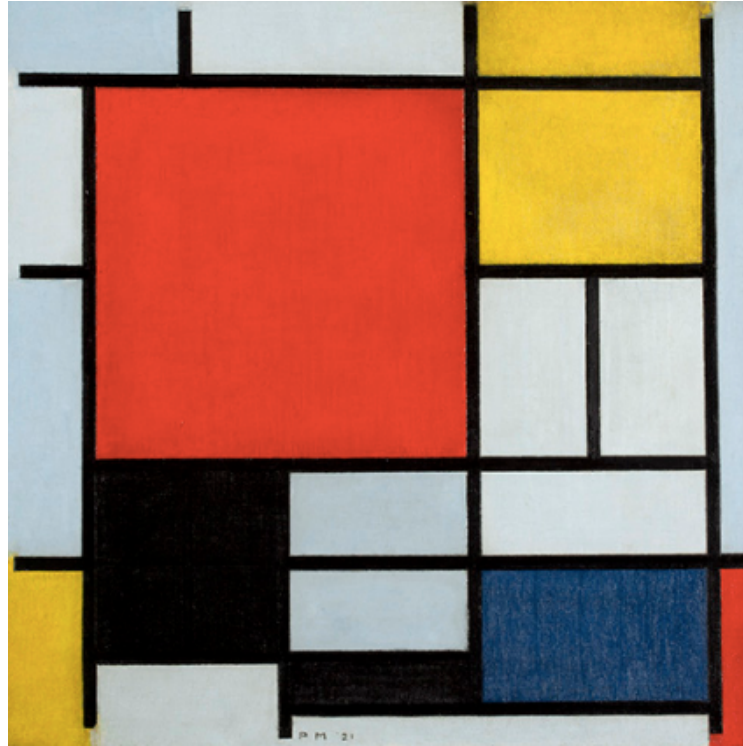


Figure Seventeen. Oil on canvas, *Composition with Large Red Plane, Yellow, Black, Gray, and Blue*, Piet Mondrian, 1921.



Figure Eighteen. Oil on canvas, *Black and Violet*, Wassily Kandinsky, 1923.

This is one of the central problems that Bacon's art addresses: how can we "[s]ave the contour," that which gives determinacy to a figure, all the while presenting an image without the dominance of narration, representation, and individuated bodies.<sup>38</sup> With expressionism and abstraction, the scale tips too heavily resulting in an unliveable chaos. It is the kind of art that cannot give intensity. Bacon's third approach to the problematic of modern art (getting beyond representation) expresses a passage, a becoming, that demonstrates the processes, many imperceptible, that a body undergoes as it moves beyond and below what can be conceptualized, and in fact what counts as a discernible individual or form of subjectification. Bacon thus treats the human form much as Nietzsche does, a kind of bridge or tightrope that is always on the way to the overman (which is to be read as nonhuman). There is, however, always a return of the human figure on the canvas—what Cézanne refers to as that "stubborn geometry" or "geologic lines" of representation—but there are valuable ways of demonstrating it undergoing a process or movement.<sup>39</sup> This is one of Bacon's fundamental accomplishments.

Deleuze defines this process of movement and erasure as the intervening of the Diagram on the Figure. The construction of form and its disintegration is a process that takes several forms throughout Deleuze's work, including the "distinctness and obscurity" of *Difference and Repetition*, itself a Dionysian reprisal of the Apollonian "distinct and clear" that Deleuze addresses in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*.<sup>40</sup> I return to *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, which in certain respects is the foundation of Deleuze's aesthetics, in Chapter III.

There is another distinction that complements the Figure and Diagram, which also comes out of *The Logic of Sensation*: the digital and the analogue. A digital code homogenizes

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<sup>38</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 89.

<sup>39</sup> Cézanne, quoted in Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 91.

<sup>40</sup> Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 161, 213.

and codifies data by sorting it primarily into a binary set. In contrast, there exists the analogical mode, which organizes elements based on the immediate sensations created. For example, take synthesizers—“[a]nalogical synthesizers are ‘modular’: they establish an immediate connection between heterogeneous elements.”<sup>41</sup> What is of interest to the overall goal of this chapter—the development of the sign, language, and body that define the painterly pole of Deleuze’s aesthetics—is that Deleuze actually discusses an analogical form of language: “analogical language would be a language of relations, which consists of expressive movements, paralinguistic signs, breaths and screams . . .”<sup>42</sup> As I shall get into in the next section of this chapter, this is exactly what Deleuze describes in *The Logic of Sense* as the language of the schizophrenic. One can therefore demonstrate one of the major consistencies in Deleuze’s thought based on the life of this idea. There is a kinship in his philosophy of language and his aesthetics, most notably in the case of painting, which he calls “the analogical art par excellence.”<sup>43</sup>

~THE LANGUAGE OF THE SCHIZOPHRENIC~

From the outset of *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense*, it is clear that Antonin Artaud is one of the key conceptual personae in Deleuze’s oeuvre. Artaud’s concept the Body without Organs gains significant traction from *The Logic of Sense* onward. While its role and description sways both with and without the influence of Guattari (and this movement is no aberration for many of the concepts Deleuze employs) the Body without Organs and its creator, Artaud, can be observed throughout Deleuze’s work and thus surveyed to draw out the waves of consistency in his thought—a gesture fundamental to a systematic thinker like Deleuze, whose philosophy must be taken as a whole, though open,

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<sup>41</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 95.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 93

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.



structure. While on the topic of the Body without Organs, though, I should mention that Deleuze once remarked to Claire Parnet that he and Guattari did not share a common understanding of this term.

Now, the introduction of Artaud is, as many of Deleuze's figureheads, in response to a particular problem. For Deleuze, Artaud "pursues . . . the terrible revelation of a thought without image, and the conquest of a new principle which does not allow itself to be represented."<sup>44</sup> The Body without Organs is what Artaud calls this.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, Artaud's theatre of cruelty expresses this "terrible revelation" with fervent precision. As Catherine Dale states in "Cruel: Antonin Artaud and Gilles Deleuze,"

Artaud's theatre is not designed to represent or reproduce (describe) man but to create a being which moves. The language of Artaud is a symbiosis of technologies—assignifying semiotics, affective gestures, violent sounds and painful noises—challenging the organization of the organism in its collectivity (audience, participant, body) and in its singularity (event), occurring at the chasm between language and the body.<sup>46</sup>

At the heart of this process is what Artaud deems "cruelty." This is not the cruelty of war, but something far more eternal. For Artaud, "everything that acts is cruelty," and in announcing this he carves out his position in a philosophy of affect that deals with the pervasiveness of cruelty.<sup>47</sup> Deleuze will reprise how he takes up Artaud's cruelty with regard to Bacon's artwork. Everyday forces of sitting (fig. 19) standing over a washbasin (fig. 7), falling asleep (fig. 20), and so on come to bear a weight that exhausts the body, disturbing its rhythmic speeds and slowness.

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<sup>44</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 147.

<sup>45</sup> I deal with the source of the term, the Body without Organs, in the following section.

<sup>46</sup> Catherine Dale, "Cruel: Antonin Artaud and Gilles Deleuze, in *A Shock to Thought: Expression After Deleuze and Guattari*, ed. Brian Massumi (New York: Routledge, 2002), 88.

<sup>47</sup> Antonin Artaud, *The Theatre and its Double*, trans. Clayton Eshleman, Los Angeles: Panjandrum, 1958), 85.



Figure Nineteen. Oil on canvas, *Portrait of George Dyer Talking*, Francis Bacon, 1966,  
 © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved. DACS / SOCAN (2018).



Figure Twenty. Oil on canvas, *Lying Figure*, Francis Bacon, 1961,  
 © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved. DACS / SOCAN (2018).

This weight is cruelty; and if Saint Augustine once spoke of his weight being his love, we now find in Artaud a weight of cruelty. What Deleuze inherits from Artaud is an understanding of this force as affecting the body in all circumstances. In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze examines the affection even language (something that seems to be an Idea not an affect of the body) has on us at the level of immediate forces. He defines this as the schizophrenic depth of language.

Two versions of linguistic depth arise in *The Logic of Sense*, the first being the schizophrenic's and the second being what Deleuze calls the "crack"—a kind of return of depth to the surface.<sup>48</sup> The second version is equally as fascinating as the first and elucidates the communication of the distinct planes of depth and surface, shedding light on the divergent series of ascending away from or descending to the depths—each does not exist on the same straight line that can be traced from depth upward finally to the heights; the communication of series is not that straightforward. For our purpose, however, it is the first version of depth that concerns us. It is the realm of the pre-Socratics, Nietzsche to a certain extent (though he floats to the surface at times), and finally Artaud. Think of the way they all philosophize; *qu'est-ce que s'orienter dans la pensée?* [what is orientation in thinking?]. Thales, Anaximander, Heraclitus, Empedocles—each a natural philosopher or physicist—who sought out the nature of things in the material world as such.<sup>49</sup> The orientation of their thinking was down into the caverns and into the deep. As legend has it, Thales once fell in a well for gazing upward at the stars, so perhaps the orientation of his thinking was up to the heights, though that fall forced him back to the ground with the other pre-Socratics. And in those caves we will eventually find Nietzsche toiling away with his hammer, a tool we must

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<sup>48</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 222.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 128-9.

remember is that of the geologist or speleologist, and not necessarily a statue-crushing mallet.

What we find in Artaud is a language reduced to its purely phonetic elements: “clappings, crackings, gnashings, cracklings, explosions, the shattered sounds of internal objects, and also the inarticulate howls-breaths [*cris-souffles*] of the body without organs.”<sup>50</sup> For Deleuze, this is not to be understood as the primary or proto-linguistic state before order descends onto nonsense—literally descends, that is, given that the voice of the father is necessarily positioned above the child. Instead this state should be recognized as a schizophrenic mode of language. What the schizophrenic mode reveals is the condition of language that does not abide by any separation between words and bodies. A system of schizophrenic language reinvents the connection between bodies and language.

While in *The Logic of Sense* Artaud is burdened by a kind of impotence, an inability to rise to the surface of sense, by the time of *Anti-Oedipus* (1972) he signifies the “fulfillment of literature.”<sup>51</sup> Artaud’s writing achieves immediate contact with the reader, just as on the stage the audience receives words in ways that resemble how the schizophrenic does—pure consonants, indigestible sentences, and screams that vibrate the body. Let us begin with an example. Artaud’s translation of Lewis Carroll’s famous ‘nonsense’ poem, *Jabberwocky*, creates a certain fusion of words into unpronounceable or what Deleuze calls non-decomposable blocks. In essence, this illustrates a linguistic form of the Body without Organs, much as in *The Logic of Sensation* painting will as well. While *Sense* and *Sensation* are obviously working with different languages (the verbal and pictorial respectively), one must acknowledge that “the expression of intensities and bodily sensations, however, is common to both works and

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<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 193.

<sup>51</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Seem Mark, and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 146.

Artaud is a key figure for Deleuze in that discussion.”<sup>52</sup> Where this is leading us is a complete understanding of one aesthetic pole, that of painting, which we shall see Deleuze contrasts with the functions of music. Put simply, painting and music stand for the two sides of what art can accomplish. Furthermore, since Deleuze’s writing on certain literature (primarily Sade, Masoch, and Artaud) bears such a striking resemblance to what he says about painting, and literature is frequently employed in *The Logic of Sensation* to explicate the function of painting, a study of Artaud begets an understanding of painting.

Turning to Artaud’s translation from Carroll’s *Jabberwocky*, what jumps out to us is that he abandons what Deleuze calls the playful and clean aspect of the original. Carroll is a thinker of the surfaces; he glides across them without entering the dirty depths that Artaud famously refers to as a place where “[a]ll writing is PIG SHIT (that is to say, every fixed or written word is decomposed into noisy, alimentary, and excremental bits).”<sup>53</sup> As Deleuze describes it, there is a body-sieve filled with holes in the language of the schizophrenic, and therefore no proper distinction can be made between language and bodies. Recall Freud’s definition of the ego in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, where he calls it a barrier that applies the classic Kantian categories (time, space, contiguity) only as checks that filter out immediate experience, the presence of which, when it manages to bypass the ego, becomes unconscious trauma.<sup>54</sup> The ego, like the surface of sense, orders the world in such a way that it negates pure affection. A border is necessary in this process of rejection, no matter how incorporeal the margin may be, and its absence opens up the floodgates to piercing words and wounding tonic elements. In a chapter on orality in *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze constructs two series that commonly demarcate the distinctions between words and bodies. On the one hand, there is

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<sup>52</sup> Robert Mark Causey, “Between Two Logics: Deleuze and Artaud on the Logics of Sense and Sensation (PhD Thesis, Emory University, 2010), 10.

<sup>53</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 88.

<sup>54</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, trans. James Strachey (London: W. W. Norton and Company, 1961), 31-33.

eating. Objects are things in the world insofar as they are edible, can be taken up and chewed. On the other hand, however, there is speaking. This is an incorporeal series removed from the objects it signifies: “Language is rendered possible by that which distinguishes it. What separates sounds from bodies makes sounds into the elements of a language. What separates speaking from eating renders speech possible; what separates propositions from things renders propositions possible.”<sup>55</sup> These two series are brought together in Artaud, who is quite explicit not only about the effect language has on his body but who also prescribes this connection as fundamental to what he sees as the pinnacle of aesthetics. What poets like Charles Baudelaire and Edgar Allan Poe accomplished, according to Artaud, was a tetanus art. If words are wounding for Artaud and they infringe on the body as a disease does, it is no surprise that he affirms a tetanus-like aesthetics. Yet there is a less apparent meaning that Robert Mark Causey and Geoffrey Bennington suggest. Artaud is likely drawing on the phonetic similarity between tetanus and the conjunction of the French *tête* + *anus*. Artaud’s work is a monstrous combination of eating and speaking or that which becomes and has close ties to excrement (*anus*) and Idea (*tête*).<sup>56</sup>

Despite Artaud’s work describing the zone of indiscernibility between signifier and signified, this is not to say that such nonsense does not carry an effect. In literally inscribing the body of the schizophrenic with words, it is not the case that one cannot speak of it, having to as it were pass such nonsense over in silence. On the contrary, it becomes clear that, not only is a full appreciation of this effect fundamental to a clinical approach to schizophrenia, it marks a watershed moment in the history of aesthetics that substantiates a move toward immediate experience. As for the experience of the schizophrenic, a useful example is Franz Kafka’s “In the Penal Colony.” It matters not whether the prisoners

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<sup>55</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 186.

<sup>56</sup> Causey, “Between Two Logics,” 59 n. 3.

understand their sentence; that it be carved on their flesh is sufficient to understand how one's body is affected by it. Though like most examples, even this does not fully capture the essence of Artaud's experience. It is not, as we read in Kafka's short story, that words are superfluous in expressing the experiences of the prisoners. Rather, Artaud stands in a far more antithetical position to language and its capacity of properly representing or standing in for his sensations.

Artaud elevates this schizophrenic relation to language to the level of an aesthetic framework. In the end, aesthetics according to Artaud and Deleuze strives to the experience of that which occurs directly between bodies, or nerve upon nerve, as Artaud prefers to label the connection in *The Nerve Meter*. Where Deleuze intervenes, however, is in suggesting that this is a sufficient though not necessary aesthetic function. As this chapter begins to unravel, music begins where painting ends and accomplishes a vastly different potential: a distinct relation to time and the natural world. Where for Deleuze painting is molecular, music is cosmological. This will be the central focus of Chapter III, while currently Artaud's language and the carnal depths occupies our attention.

~ ORGAN-IZED SENSATION ~

In this chapter so far, the role the body and language play in Artaud's life and work have spoken to their psychoanalytic and aesthetic status. Along with these two sides to Artaud's work, one can also suggest that there is an ontological importance to his claims; in other words, Artaud's writing and experience outline an ontology about how matter organizes itself and what lies below the organism. It is this ontology that arguably shifts in Deleuze's interpretation between *The Logic of Sense* and *The Logic of Sensation*. This ontology is that of the Body without Organs. How it develops in between these two texts is where we now turn so as to feel the consistency between his thought on literature (as encountered in

*The Logic of Sense*) and painting (in *Sensation*).

Artaud technically uses the term just once in his radio play, “To Have Done with the Judgement of God,” though its truth resonates throughout his work. Its explicit appearance is worth quoting in its entirety:

Man is sick because he is badly constructed.  
We must make up our minds to strip him bare in order to scrape  
off that animalcule that itches him mortally,

god,  
and with god  
his organs.

For you can tie me up if you wish,  
but there is nothing more useless than an organ.

When you will have made him a body without organs,  
then you will have delivered him from all his automatic reactions  
and restored him to his true freedom.

Then you will teach him again to dance wrong side out  
as in the frenzy of dance halls  
and this wrong side out will be his real place.<sup>57</sup>

The Body without Organs represents a twofold movement for Artaud. It names a pre-individual experience of force and it also appears as a kind of protection constructed by Artaud in light of the pain experienced by a purely phonetic language.<sup>58</sup> As for the first characteristic, the Body without Organs illustrates a primary order of our body that does not subordinate sensation to cognitive faculties like thinking or judgement. These faculties are moments of static organization (concepts, Ideas, logical reasoning) in an otherwise heterogeneous and smooth flow of bodies. Following Artaud, Deleuze conceives of embodiment beyond a so-called developed or organized form. For this reason is he

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<sup>57</sup> Antonin Artaud, “To Have Done with the Judgement of God,” in *Antonin Artaud, Selected Writings*, ed. Susan Sontag, trans. Helen Weaver (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 570-1.

<sup>58</sup> While pre-individual, let us not forget that there is something post-individual about it noted by Artaud’s tense: “When you will have made . . . a body without organs.” The importance of this future tense comes about in Deleuze’s writing on alcoholism in *The Logic of Sense*. Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 158-60.



particularly interested in embryology, a study concerned more so with the genesis of organization, and its emergence from an undifferentiated mass toward the organisms we observe, than intuiting bodily structures as readymade and teleological substances. The amorphous becoming of the Body without Organs forces us to imagine divergent ways of being and to treat organization as something that is passed through, not ended in or culminated with. Here I am employing language more in line with Deleuze's appropriation of Artaud in his *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* collaboration with Guattari. It is clear, however, that Deleuze's approach to Artaud in *The Logic of Sense* outlines some of the key insights and instructions, as it were, in "making yourself a Body without Organs."<sup>59</sup>

Approached through the lens of the effect language can have on bodies, the schizophrenic experience represents a nonorganic (non-organized) relation of signifier to signified, deterritorializing our standard relationship to language where words stand apart from the things being signified. As the Thirteenth Series of "the Schizophrenic and the Little Girl," explores, this unmediated experience of language stands at the interstice of madness and creation. In the words of Edward Scheer, "how can a schizophrenic be an artist, when they are 'out of control'? What is the status of art that risks nonsense . . . ?"<sup>60</sup> These are the very questions that made aspects of Deleuze's *Logic of Sense* cause "something of a furore in France in the late 1960."<sup>61</sup> At first, Deleuze appears simply to be grappling with the aesthetic potential of nonsense and chaos—something that he will return to in *The Logic of Sensation* and his writing on music mainly in *A Thousand Plateaus*, which I focus on in Chapter III. Yet his engagement with Artaud goes further than explaining a neutral act of creation, and this is what causes such a "furore." Deleuze, in line with Artaud, demonstrates that concomitant

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<sup>59</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 149-66.

<sup>60</sup> Edward Scheer, *Antonin Artaud: A Critical Reader*, ed. Edward Scheer (New York: Routledge 2004), 27.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

to this direct experience of language is visceral pain experienced by the creator-subject. This last point sheds light on why Artaud arguably created the Body without Organs as a way of making the barrages and piercings of language something less destructive and more productive, perhaps even the origin of a new aesthetic experience.

The way in which Deleuze says Artaud's Body without Organs "transform[s] the painful passion of the body into a triumphant action, obedience into command" is a complex process.<sup>62</sup> One of its defence mechanisms is its refusal to conform to what Deleuze calls the language of the "heights."<sup>63</sup> While this language appears to the schizophrenic as generating wounds on their body, Artaud is able to appropriate this effect by reproducing it on the stage. What his body receives is the pain of words, yet Artaud does not choose to escape this harm, knowing full well the greater cruelty of static concepts and that of the foreign language of the heights. The depths break away from the organization that comes from on high, generating the autonomy of sensation that grounds Deleuze's writing on art.

In *The Logic of Sensation*, Deleuze draws on Artaud's Body without Organs as a way to conceptualize cruelty. This cruelty is not so much that of a represented scene (e.g., that there is something screamed about) but quite simply a metaphysics of force—the brute result of bodies and sensations interacting, which does not require the presupposition of a subject acted upon. That the theatre of cruelty does not have to do with representation is also picked up on by Jacques Derrida in an essay from *Writing and Difference*, stating, "the theatre of cruelty is not a *representation*. It is life itself, in the extent to which life is unrepresentable."<sup>64</sup> Through gestures and not speech, Artaud lays bear the flesh of language and explains that in this state repetition is impossible—a claim that has significant implications for Deleuze. As

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<sup>62</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 88.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 189-90.

<sup>64</sup> Jacques Derrida, "The Theater of Cruelty and the Closure of Representation," in *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 234.

Deleuze writes,

Bacon and Artaud meet on many points: the Figure is the body without organs (dismantle the organism in favor of the body, the face in favor of the head); the body without organs is flesh and nerve; a wave flows through it and traces levels upon it; a sensation is produced when the wave encounters the Forces acting on the body, an ‘affective athleticism,’<sup>65</sup> a scream-breath.<sup>66</sup>

This scream-breath is almost certainly akin to the “breath-words [*mots-souffles*] and howl-words [*mots-cris*]” we heard from the Artaud of *The Logic of Sense*.<sup>67</sup> The protagonist of the depths has thus begun to take on a painterly form. It is equally so worth noting that *The Logic of Sensation* compares and contrasts the work of Francis Bacon to several other literary figures like Beckett, Carroll, Kafka, and Proust, to name an important bunch. As Deleuze will explain later in his career, in *What is Philosophy?*, the artist, philosopher, and scientist create and respond to a unique set of problems and harness forces in ways particular to their field. This is not to say, however, that these areas cannot speak about the other. Indeed in *The Logic of Sensation* we witness Deleuze creating and organizing concepts specific to certain affects, the likes of which are the domain of the artist. Art does not need philosophy to be capable of thinking itself, though certain shifts in aspect [*Gestalt*] occur with the intervention of other realms of creation, be it other discourses (philosophy, science) or aesthetic media (literature, sculpture, music). This is one possible defence for why Deleuze selects literary figures for the most part to give potential readings of Bacon’s work. Above everyone else, though, Artaud is Deleuze’s guide through how Bacon renders the body and cruelty on the canvas, how it acts on the flesh at a molecular level and this being the essence of painting.

Artaud’s presence in *The Logic of Sensation* immediately recalls his role in *The Logic of Sense* as a figure of the depths, and in this later text Deleuze makes clear Bacon’s affinity to

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<sup>65</sup> Deleuze borrows this phrase from Artaud’s *The Theater and Its Double*.

<sup>66</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 40.

<sup>67</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 88.

the depths not just by how much he has in common with Artaud but with how little Bacon's work relates to thinkers of another plane, namely, the surface. The figurehead of the surface, Lewis Carroll, unmatched in this capacity except perhaps by the Stoics, overlaps with Bacon on but one claim. Deleuze states, "Bacon and Lewis Carroll meet on this single point: the smile of a cat."<sup>68</sup> Beyond this modest connection, a convergence between the Cheshire Cat's grin and Bacon's series of hysteric smiles that seem to outlive the rest of the parts of his canvas, there is not much else that relates Bacon to those who glide along the surface of sense. The depths are his home, and for this reason is Artaud his true match.

Together, Artaud and Bacon articulate a sensation detached from the individual. The schizophrenic depths of an immediate sensation occur even with regard to language and the status of words once thought to be immaterial and ideational. This materiality constitutes a whole aesthetic pole for Deleuze. But there is a curious transition that occurs in how Deleuze describes this aesthetic in Bacon's case. Though he is adamant on the affinity between Artaud and Bacon, he does not attach the schizophrenic label to Bacon's sensation. Perhaps this is simply because one ought not call someone who is not clinically schizophrenic such terms. Although, at least as it pertained to Artaud, the term was as critical as it was clinical. Examining why Deleuze chooses not to call Bacon's depths schizophrenic is valuable given its prominence in *The Logic of Sense* onward through until his collaborations with Guattari. In *The Logic of Sensation*, however, the depths as characterized by Bacon are not given the title of schizophrenia; rather, they are called hysteric. According to Deleuze, Bacon's paintings represent a hysteric art in its truest form.

~ PAINTING HYSTERIA ~

By now it is hopefully apparent why Deleuze takes a critical-clinical interest in

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<sup>68</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 25.

Artaud and treats his relation to language and the body as fundamental to a proper understanding of the depths and for an aesthetics of painting. Despite how consistent Deleuze's treatments of Artaud and Bacon are, specifically regarding the forms of language and/or sensation that act directly on the body, Deleuze substitutes the term schizophrenia for hysteria. Whether this is due to the mileage the term has had with Guattari, or the desire not to use the term to describe a non-schizophrenic artist, is up for discussion. Allow us to begin with hysteria and sensation, since schizophrenia has been one of the chief focuses in this chapter already.

Tomas Geyskens essay, "Painting as Hysteria: Deleuze on Bacon," analyzes the use Deleuze has for describing an art as hysteric among an array of other choice concepts. Arguably, if set on pulling a term from psychoanalysis, there are numerous ones less outdated in their applicability than hysteria—a term equal parts misogynistic as it is inaccurate. This is not to say that, in making use of it, Deleuze is participating in any of this; as always he is likely pushing the term beyond its clichéd and gendered presuppositions such that it unfolds another use, namely, in designating an aesthetics of visceral forces. At this time, let us turn to the relation between aesthetics and hysteria.

Geyskens begins by directing us to the limitations of Freud's understanding of hysteria. Freud reads it, like many other symptoms in his diagnoses, by focusing too heavily on the 'psychic content' it contains, and in so doing elides "the corporeal and affective madness of hysteria."<sup>69</sup> In affirming that the hysteric body itself says just as much as the speech and beliefs of the patient, we find Deleuze returning to nondiscursive signs much like those in the schizophrenic Artaud of *The Logic of Sense*. Geyskens continues, "[i]n symptoms such as anorexia, bulimia and self-mutilation, contemporary hysteria disposes of Freud's

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<sup>69</sup> Thomas Geyskens, "Painting as Hysteria: Deleuze on Bacon," in *Deleuze and Guattari Studies* vol. 2.2 (2009), 142.

‘psychic content’ and only shows the excessive presence of the body, the quivering of the flesh that does not speak but works directly on the nerves.”<sup>70</sup> Bacon illustrates this relation to the body in works such as *Figure at a Washbasin* (fig. 7). The body paradoxically seems to be escaping from itself. This relation can be called hysteric insofar as we define it as a certain kind of bodily communication, that is, one “not about me escaping from my body, but about the body trying to escape from itself through one of its openings, in an immobile spasm.”<sup>71</sup> Finally, Geyskens describes the immediacy of sensation tied to hysteria by referencing the work of Josef Breuer, whose writing transitioned from psychology (which deals with representations) to electromechanics and its focus on affects or vibrations. The scream and the smile are not results of or signs related to a general narrative; they belong to the hysteria of painting, and by this Deleuze has in mind a kind of pathic response a work of art can evoke. We might recall Maldiney’s distinction between sensation and perception, where the latter tells a story (narration) but the former purveys something far more primary.

The smile is something nondiscursive and hysteric for both Bacon and Deleuze (perhaps even for Lewis Carroll). It is that which remains when the rest of the body disappears. Yet, just as much, the smile is hysterical for the way it is divorced from any narrative; it is purely of the paint and the body, not of the individual or in response to some state of affairs. To adopt a phrase from *What is Philosophy?*, “the smile on the canvas is made solely with colors, lines, shadow, and light . . . it is the percept or affect of the material itself, and the smile of oil.”<sup>72</sup> Bacon’s famous study of Velázquez’s Pope Innocent X (fig. 21, fig. 22), a haunting reminder of the autonomy of parts of the body, presents a scream like no other.

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

<sup>72</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 166.



Figure Twenty-One. Oil on canvas, *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, Francis Bacon, 1953, © The Estate of Francis Bacon. All rights reserved. DACS / SOCAN (2018).



Figure Twenty-Two. Oil on canvas, *Portrait of Innocent X*, Diego Velázquez, 1650.

Bacon cites *Battleship Potemkin* as an influence (fig. 23), and following its experimentation in montage, Bacon is pointing to something beyond classical representation.



Figure Twenty-Three. *Battleship Potemkin* (detail), Sergei Eisenstein, 1925.

His tools are not those of the non-human eye of the camera, but rather of visibility, invisibility, and framing—ideas Deleuze also takes up in *Foucault*. Bacon's Pope Innocent X presents a pure scream that is cut off from a scene that might explain its origin. *Why the long face, Pope?* No answer; just a bottomless mouth, a guttural cry that shakes the canvas. Bacon withholds the scene that would work to explain the scream. There is an effect of a pure scream brought on by spontaneity, what Deleuze would call the Diagram, and Bacon accomplishes this usually (emphasis on usually) not by erasing the figure it is attached to, but by presenting it as something on the brink of randomness and sutured to a narrative being represented. Again, Bacon walks a fine line between abstraction and expressionism.

Bacon's Pope gives off a similar sensation. He separates the scream from a represented scene by enveloping the figure in curtains. The curtains in Bacon's Pope resemble those on a stage as if playing the role of a backdrop upon which a scene stands in front. However, such an interpretation could not be more antithetical to the way ground, contour, and figure interact in a Bacon painting. Deleuze makes clear that the three always exist on the same plane in Bacon's works; they bleed into one another. What at first looks to be a ground that sets up a scene ends up revealing itself as another piece beside, and not behind, the figure. It loses the ability to establish a rhythm out of which a story can be extracted. How painting resists or cannot live up to this rhythm of stories, motifs, narratives—perhaps we can boil it right down to modes of temporality—is a significant way in which music, which Deleuze considers more accomplished in these areas, begins where painting ends. This claim I return to in Chapter III.

Another method of removing representation and narration used by Bacon is his constant reference to the “pity” of his works. While it works well in conjunction with ideas of “cruelty” à la Artaud, it has a use beyond the clean dualism of pity-cruelty. Pity is



something religious for Bacon and meat and flesh are the objects of this pity. The face that lets off a scream is not something horrific or sensational (a term Deleuze rejects in readings of Bacon), though this is precisely where our mind goes when confronted with its force. “*Pity the meat,*”<sup>73</sup> Deleuze proclaims, an idea that calls to mind the “pity of stones” from his *Logic of Sense*: “How can we help but experience an unbearable pity for stones, a petrifying identification?”<sup>74</sup>

What links these two texts, and one could easily include *Masochism* and the *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* series in this conversation, is a study into the dual forces of madness and creation. Madness and creation, which is also to say madness and the invention of languages, signs, and images, are true points of connection between Deleuze’s earlier and later writing. Hysteria, schizophrenia, and masochism (when properly understood), to name some of Deleuze’s focuses, are certain expressions of madness that are capable of creating new signs.<sup>75</sup> Yet the particular kind of sign created evolves as Deleuze moves from a *Logic of Sense* to *Sensation*. As Anne Sauvagnargues writes in *Deleuze and Art*, as we move forward chronologically in Deleuze’s writings “[t]he sign is no longer indebted to a hermeneutics of sense which deciphers signifying procedures, but belongs to a logic of forces . . . The ethology of the affect creates a path from *The Logic of Sense* to *The Logic of Sensation*.”<sup>76</sup> Like the experience of the schizophrenic, Deleuze imagines an aesthetics divorced from the common linguistic structure of the sign. In its place is “[a]rt as a vital machine and assemblage of signs that is irreducible to language.” We know these to be the threads running through *Sensation* and that the harnessing of forces always involves a kind of madness. By this madness Deleuze means the occupation of an *anomal*/anomalous position,

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<sup>73</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 21-22.

<sup>74</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 155.

<sup>75</sup> Deleuze, *Masochism*, 69-80.

<sup>76</sup> Anna Sauvanargues, *Deleuze and Art*, trans. Samantha Bankston (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 10.

one which can make language stutter and bring forth new series of becoming—be it woman, animal, molecular, and so on. We might entertain thinking of schizophrenia and hysteria as two lines of flight, both working from within anomalous engagements with the body. Where the path of the schizophrenic plummets us into the howling depths, and there we find the Body without Organs and all its processes prior to “differentiated” organs, the hysteric arguably commits another escape from the organized body.<sup>77</sup> As presented in Bacon’s paintings, we encounter the body as it attempts to discharge itself from itself. Excrement, vomit, cramps, and contortions are the everyday forces that do not necessarily act *on* the body, as words do for the schizophrenic, but *are* the body—parts that seep out of other parts are the result of a constant yet impossible task wherein the hysteric is determined to have the whole body exit out of a single organism as with the mouth and bulimia.

Deleuze wants us to understand that hysteria is not just what Bacon paints; it is also prompted in the viewer in the vertiginous movement of their sight. Now what do we mean by this? Deleuze contends that painting “gives us eyes all over: in the ear, in the stomach, in the lungs,” and this appears to be something on the brink of schizophrenia and hysteria, though Deleuze positions it as something more so the latter.<sup>78</sup> The hysteric does not necessarily experience all entities—whether corporeal (things) or incorporeal (language)—as affects on the body as we have seen with the schizophrenic. Rather, the hysteric experiences a kind of heightened sensation, a synaesthesia not so much where one sense prompts another, but where one sense is experienced in another zone: the stomach that sees, the ear that smells. These are radical examples that Deleuze does not bother with (though he does say music puts an ear in our belly). Nevertheless, he is set on explaining one sensation,

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<sup>77</sup> “Whereas differentiation determines the virtual content of the Idea as problem, differentiation expresses the actualisation of this virtual and the constitution of solutions” (Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 209).

<sup>78</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 45.

namely, the hysteric experience of touch through the eyes. This experience is called haptic perception. Deleuze leads us through its history in art and brings us back to the hysteria we experience as spectators of Bacon's work. What we should keep in the back of our mind is also the communication of aesthetic media this process entails. The synaesthesia of overlapping sensations is one of the most important tropes in how Deleuze writes art criticism.

~ HAPTIC SENSATION ~

The concept of the haptic arises from a distinction made by Alois Riegl between two forms of perception (haptic and optic). The brilliance of the haptic is that it makes possible a way of seeing with the hand that does not simply regress into a subservience of the hand to the eye. Egyptian art is said to be haptic, and indeed it is in reference to its bas-relief that Riegl coins the term, which comes from the Greek *aptô* [touch]. Riegl's study of Egyptian art highlights its planar quality, especially how all its parts—background, contour, and figure—strike the viewer as equidistant from each other. Deleuze will also emphasize this aspect in Bacon, who he thinks represents a becoming-Egyptian in art. This Egyptology will also prove important in Chapter II, as we examine a possible synthesis of the aesthetics of Bacon and Proust. A rare term, Egypt somehow arises in Deleuze's writings on Bacon and Proust.

Before examining the haptic in the work of Riegl and Deleuze and Guattari (who first mention it in *A Thousand Plateaus* in the section on "The Smooth and the Striated"), let us make one parenthetical note. Riegl's use of the term *baptisch* is surprisingly sparse and in fact makes but one appearance (and this appearance is merely an added note made by the editor, Emile Reisch, mind you) in his 1964 work, *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*. In explaining the quality of Egyptian bas-relief, Riegl originally uses the word *taktisch*, though he would go on to question his choice of words, thus informing Reisch of his desire to change it to *baptisch*.

It is not unlike Deleuze to amplify such parenthetical additions—his most famous example being the Body without Organs in Artaud, though let us not forget Leibniz’s “fold,” an equally sparse term in the source text. As we shall see next, it is not just that Deleuze inherits a lightly used term from Riegl; he also reworks it in a large way. As for its original appearance though, Riegl writes as follows:

[A] tactile plane suggested by the eye of touch . . . is the plane which the eye perceives when it comes so close to the surface of an object, that all the silhouettes and, in particular all shadows which otherwise could disclose an alteration in depth, disappear. The perception of objects, which characterises this first level of the ancient *Kunstwollen*, is thus tactile, and in as much as it has to be optical to a certain degree, it is *nabsichtig*; ancient Egyptian art expresses it in almost its purest form.<sup>79</sup>

As you may have noticed, the word haptic is not in the above passage, and this is due to the word tactile being substituted for haptic, as already mentioned, in a later note made by the editor. What Riegl is ultimately saying is that the denial of depth creates a vision that is like touching. Deleuze wants to take this claim much further.

The haptic comes on the scene first in *A Thousand Plateaus* where it exemplifies one of the ways in which the striated cuts up smooth space, dividing it into the five senses that each play their own role. The haptic breaches this set of boundaries. By experiencing touch by way of sight, one enters into a smooth space where the senses are not cordoned off into certain abilities.<sup>80</sup> As Deleuze constantly says, and here he is following Henri Bergson, perception is also a mode of selection and of interests and desires that exclude and select that which is sensed. The haptic is a line of flight that grants the possibility for selecting anew, tapping into a territory of force unlike the expected modes of the senses. Where Deleuze picks up on Riegl in *The Logic of Sensation* follows closely on this first appearance in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Bacon, Deleuze shows, can be called Egyptian for the way he too puts

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<sup>79</sup> Alois Riegl, *Late Roman Art Industry*, trans. Rolf Winkes (Rome: Bretschneider, 1985), 24-5.

<sup>80</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 492-99.

all the elements of the painting on the same plane, making them equidistant from the viewer and communicating with one another. This communication also works with light and shadow, something like chiaroscuro in the Baroque, which gives an enormous sense of depth, so much so that it brings the background forward. As Deleuze states in *Cinema 1* (1983), in the Baroque, “the elements of a plane act and react on the elements of another plane, where no form, no colour is restricted to a single plane, where the dimensions of the foreground are abnormally enlarged in order to enter directly into relationship with the background by an abrupt reduction in sizes.”<sup>81</sup> Likewise, Bacon has the parts of his painting communicate through the way in which the pictorial ground and Figure bleed into one another by way of the contour, or those shapes (parallelepipeds, ovals, rings) that both divide the work and disintegrate it back into unity. One thinks of the erasure of the face as a moment where the Figure not only ceases to be representational but also where it begins to become the material structure, the indiscernible “background,” which is, obviously, never “back,” as in behind, in Bacon’s works of art.<sup>82</sup>

One element not yet accounted for is how Bacon is a master colourist and Deleuze uses this quality of his paintings to show how Bacon dissolves the background, creating a haptic sensation, and shows painting as hysteria. If there is a special relation between hysteria and painting, and what characterizes Bacon is his use of colour, it follows that something hysteric is caused by colour. Painting renders invisible forces visible and this corresponds to a hysteric act because it releases “presences” by way of a sensation of colour. Deleuze states this directly: “[w]ith painting, hysteria becomes art” and painting is the most hysteric art

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<sup>81</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 26.

<sup>82</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 103.

given the way in which “color is a direct action on the nervous system.”<sup>83</sup> What this hysteria ends up being is a vibration or rhythm instigated by Bacon’s colours, who like Titian (fig. 24), Rembrandt (fig. 25), Rubens (fig. 26), Cézanne (fig. 27), and van Gogh (fig. 28) to name a few, stand in the art historical tradition as masters of colour.



Figure Twenty-Four. Oil on canvas, *The Gypsy Madonna*, Titian, c. 1511.



Figure Twenty-Five. Oil on canvas, *Self-Portrait*, Rembrandt van Rijn, 1660.

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<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 52-3.



Figure Twenty-Six. Oil on panel, *The Descent from the Cross*, Peter Paul Rubens, 1614.



Figure Twenty-Seven. Oil on canvas, *The Large Bathers*, Paul Cézanne, 1905.





Figure Twenty-Eight. Oil on canvas, *Wheatfield with Crows*, Vincent van Gogh, 1890.

As Ota Yoshitaka explains, Deleuze's theory of colour has a foot in two traditions: the Newtonian and the Goethean theories. Following Newton, Deleuze states that there is a relation involved in colour that deals with the interplay of white and black—Deleuze calls these “relations of value” [*rapports de valeur*]. Alongside these, there are also “relations of tonality” [*rapports de tonalité*].<sup>84</sup> Here we find colour arranged as a spectrum corresponding to feelings of warmth and coolness—it is a familiar model to us raised on the colour wheel. Deleuze derives this model of colour from Goethe's physiological theory of colour. One thinks of the way complementary colours make a work of art ripple and flow. For example, in Cézanne's landscapes, it is not enough to include the green grass; one must add some red, creating a differential relation that amplifies the constant movement and communication between these tones. Similarly, it pervades van Gogh's work. Even in the greenest paintings, like his *Portrait of a One-Eyed Man* (fig. 29), van Gogh knows he must add a touch of red to

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<sup>84</sup> Ota Yoshitaka, “What is the ‘Haptic’: Consideration of *Logique de la Sensation* and Deleuze's theory of sensation,” in *Aesthetics* vol. 17 (2013), 19.



make the green all the more vibrant.

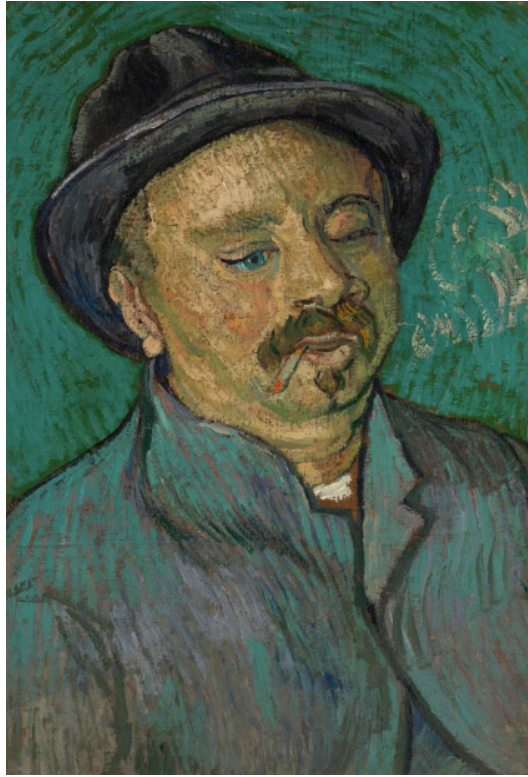


Figure Twenty-Nine. Oil on canvas, *Portrait of a One-Eyed Man*, Vincent van Gogh, 1889.

He adds this red right in the middle, a small but impossible to miss dash where the cigarette is lit. Indeed this man with a cigarette translates perfectly to this green with a red, and it would not be far off to say this green has an addiction to red, needing it to feel most alive, in the way the man does his smoke.

It is quite musical—there are ratios in colour that correspond to moods, and it is true that certain emphases create dominant chords or colours in music and painting respectively. As we read in *What is Philosophy?*, “[c]onsonance and dissonance, harmonies of tone or color, are affects of music or painting.”<sup>85</sup> As we shall see again in Chapter III, this is an important point of resonance between painting and music, two disciplines that according

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<sup>85</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 164.

to Deleuze rarely speak the same language.<sup>86</sup> Bacon, a master colourist, creates these rhythms of the flesh with his juicy pinks and meaty reds.

Flesh is movement and Deleuze sees Bacon as harnessing the virtual powers of the Body without Organs by playing with the very contours of flesh and giving it a kind of “affective athleticism” by way of colour.<sup>87</sup> What might this rhythm look like? It is systole and diastole, contraction and expansion. Yoshitaka uses the example of the Sahara desert, which is relevant given Deleuze’s odd claim that the Sahara desert cuts a figure’s head in half in Bacon’s paintings. Yoshitaka writes, “[c]olor behaves like the Sahara . . . chang[ing] on a large scale with wind or sudden rainfall. However, it is still the Sahara even though it changes. But each grain of sand that constitutes the Sahara is not the same as the one that constituted the last Sahara.”<sup>88</sup> There is a structure, though one that moves at every instant, a Sahara of Theseus. Bacon wants to capture these imperceptible movements in a portrait, a kind of instant. He beckons those fluctuations in structure—the way one’s posture worsens every moment they sit, how hunger or sickness bubbles up to the surface, and the constant horizon of aging and death. The external presentation of these minute forces wedged deep in the body are what Deleuze defines as hysteria, and it is here that we come full circle back to this term.

This description of hysteria does somewhat beg the question as to why Deleuze opts for a hysteria and not schizophrenia of painting. What is interesting is that a division is in fact made once in *The Logic of Sensation* between hysteria and schizophrenia, which helps to clarify Deleuze’s choice. At the end of the section on hysteria in *The Logic of Sensation*, Deleuze concludes:

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<sup>86</sup> Though note that even here it is music *or* painting, not music *and* painting.

<sup>87</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 40.

<sup>88</sup> Yoshitaka, “What is the ‘Haptic,’” 21.

In a sense, music begins where painting ends, and this is what is meant when one speaks of the superiority of music. It is lodged on lines of flight that pass through bodies, but which find their consistency elsewhere, whereas painting is lodged farther up, where the body escapes from itself. But in escaping, the body discovers the materiality of which it is composed, the pure presence of which it is made, and which it would not discover otherwise . . . [Music] gives a disembodied and dematerialized body to the most spiritual of entities . . . This is why music does not have hysteria as its clinical essence, but is confronted more and more with a galloping schizophrenia. To hystericize music we would have to reintroduce colors, passing through a rudimentary or refined system of correspondence between sounds and colors.<sup>89</sup>

Deleuze is cryptic in this passage, so let us start to unpack it—although such a task requires frequent visitation throughout this thesis. The fundamental difficulty in this passage is that Deleuze appears to be claiming that music is an aesthetics of the heights; it deals with immaterial, noncorporeal faculties like time and sound. Here, these forces in turn correspond to schizophrenia, and what is perplexing is that Deleuze now situates schizophrenia in the heights, while in *The Logic of Sense* it belonged without a doubt to the depths.

To explain Deleuze's rationale, it may help to know that his claim about music in the above passage is in reference to Mozart's *Requiem*. Echoing Stendhal, Deleuze finds within the *Requiem* Mozart making an address to something from "another world." The reason music can make this move is that it is not tied to the body, flesh, and their inertia. So this appears to be what separates painting from music: an embodiment surpassed by the latter. In what way is this schizophrenic (if by this we take its definition from *The Logic of Sense* and conceptual persona with Artaud)? Is not schizophrenia markedly connected to the depths of bodies? As we found with Artaud, everything finds a way to attack the body, even the immateriality of language. As we shall see in Chapter III, this "other world" should be interpreted as the cosmos and the natural world, each a perspective beyond the raw sensations of our personal bodies. Furthermore, if Bacon's ability to "record the fact" of

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<sup>89</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 47.

sensation at a molecular level gets at something universal about bodies as they act and are acted upon—something that painting in particular can remind us of—music seeks to tell us more about what lies *beyond* our bodies. Animal territories, unknowable minds, the deep time of the cosmos—these, for Deleuze, represent the musical pole in his aesthetics.

In painting, when Deleuze writes that one discovers the materiality of the body as one escapes from it—and this being the ontological importance of the Body without Organs—he is describing a feeling of hysteria. Arguably, the schizophrenic does not follow such a path and instead experiences the immaterial as if it were something embodied, for example the attack of language on the body.<sup>90</sup> Music, like language, is the immaterial paradoxically embodied; painting, the hysteric art, discloses embodiment as such and demonstrates through the systole-diastole rhythm the genesis of the subject and its perpetual erasure.

~ FROM PAINTING TO MUSIC ~

Deleuze's move to an aesthetics of sensation that is built on the affinity between painting and hysteria furthers his transition from a discursive to nondiscursive sign, all the while engaging with questions that span his entire corpus. Grounded in a discussion of *Proust and Signs* and Deleuze and Guattari's engagement with Proust more generally, Chapter II inquires into the limits of the painterly pole of Deleuze's aesthetics and the need for music, this other pole. One must emphasize that this distinction has less to do with the primary senses each relies on (sight for painting, hearing for music), than it does the particular capabilities each medium contains. For example, where painting gestures inward to what unmediated sensations, sensations unbridled by dogmatic images of thought, look like and

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<sup>90</sup> This is not to say that the schizophrenic's experience is necessarily external. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari write of "[t]he *schizo body*, waging its own active internal struggle against the organs . . ." (Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 150).

speaks to our nervous system directly, music points outward, offering us entry into the natural world and the speeds and slowness of time. Proust serves as a significant figure when it comes to the musical model and, for Deleuze, he stands at the juncture of literature and music. In demonstrating how the painterly model fails to encapsulate Proust, we can then turn toward the end of Chapter II and the duration of Chapter III to develop the musical pole fully.

“We become universes.”<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER II

~ ON THE SENSES ~

In his 1967 study, *Masochism: Coldness and Cruelty*, Deleuze puts forward a provocative claim about language and the body. He writes of language reaching “its full significance when it acts directly on the senses [*sur la sensualité*].”<sup>2</sup> Neither the expression of concepts nor commands appears to be the essence of language. Leaving this claim without full examination, Deleuze offers any curious reader a subdued deferral to the original works of Sade and Masoch to find out the implications of his thought. This is unlike his usual energy. No doubt, one cannot help but feel that Deleuze was not ready to see the idea to its end just yet. While some may suggest that Deleuze does end up discussing it at length in *Masochism* in his account of a “demonstrative”<sup>3</sup> use of language—a claim that very much anticipates the “order-words”<sup>4</sup> of *A Thousand Plateaus*—I argue that this notion of a language that acts directly on the senses should also take us down another path. Rather than *A Thousand Plateaus* as the culmination of this tie between language and the body, one finds the “full significance” of this immediate and unmediated sensation in *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*. For this reason is a return to *Masochism* so important. It bears the traces of one of Deleuze’s central remarks on aesthetics.

There is a remarkable similarity between this unmediated experience of language and what, in *The Logic of Sensation*, Deleuze sees in the art of Francis Bacon. As discussed in Chapter I, Bacon’s paintings make an attack on our nervous system and work directly on the

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<sup>1</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 169.

<sup>2</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Masochism: Coldness and Cruelty*, trans. Jean McNeil and Aude Willam (New York: Zone Books, 2006), 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-23.

<sup>4</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 76.

body. Through the priority of colour over form (certainly indebted to the likes of Kandinsky), Bacon's modernist work exudes a world below the individualized subject. Sensation, we recall, is the interruption of form and concept, or in the words of Peter Hallward, "a force of creative intensity that pulses through actual bodies or materials."<sup>5</sup> Subsequently, when this theory of sensation is held side by side with *Masochism*, one starts to see the germination of Deleuze's later aesthetics.

Peering back to his work in the 60s, however, one also encounters another study of aesthetics in *Proust and Signs*, and unlike the cleaner sublimation at work in how the embryonic aesthetics of *Masochism* is taken up in *The Logic of Sensation*, his work on Proust resists the categories of the depths and molecular matter. To frame it in terms of Deleuze's aesthetic disjunction, Proust does not attract to the painterly pole.<sup>6</sup>

Part of the allure of Deleuze's book on Proust is just how much its aesthetic vision contrasts with his study of Francis Bacon. Whereas *Masochism*, with its depictions of contorted bodies, shocks to the senses, and purely material formula of language, is reflected in Bacon's paintings, Proust's image is not. In fact, what Deleuze says about Proust far more closely resembles what Félix Guattari and later Deleuze and Guattari say about music. The almost metric repetitions and series of lovers, the spiritualism and incorporeal use of language and time, the concepts of the refrain and motif—all this points to Proust as embodying another aesthetic framework entirely: the musical pole. The beauty of Deleuze and Deleuze and Guattari's work on aesthetics is that they take these sudden turns, at one moment focused on a purely material conception of art and another totally enamoured by immaterial forces like time and metric rhythm. And yet, as we inferred in Chapter I from *The*

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<sup>5</sup> Peter Hallward, *Out of this World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation* (London: Verso, 2006), 106.

<sup>6</sup> Such an analogy of "attraction" may call to mind magnets and magnetic poles, though I am sure Proust would prefer we think of it as an "attraction" of lovers—far more Proustian that way.

*Logic of Sensation*, on a closer reading, there is a certain univocity of aesthetics offered by the painterly mode. This is to say, the painterly pole teaches us to bring to the surface immaterial forces, and in doing so to display that the material and immaterial speak in one and the same sense. With this in mind then, whether the general aesthetics found in *Proust and Signs* can be integrated into *The Logic of Sensation* is the “apprenticeship” I take up in this chapter and conclude that it demands to be taken on its own terms.<sup>7</sup> Proust is not a painter, but a musician—a peculiar thing to call a writer, though, as we shall see, central to understanding Deleuze’s system.

~ REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PROUST ~

To paraphrase Thomas Baldwin’s adaptation of a Derridean formula: there is a spectre haunting Deleuze’s *Logic of Sensation*, the spectre of Proust. In *The Picture as Spectre in Diderot, Proust, and Deleuze*, Baldwin acknowledges one of the questions I aim to address in Deleuze’s aesthetics this chapter: what is the effect Proust has on Deleuze’s aesthetics as found in *The Logic of Sensation*? Is Proust a subtle mutation, another gene entirely, or a virus? Quite literally, Proust is the ghost in the machine—to use Gilbert Ryle’s famous image of Cartesian dualism. *Proust and Signs* is riddled with references to the spirit and to forces that resist any reduction to an immanent, brute materialism (hence providing a dualism). Particularly due to his interest in sense, meaning, the Idea, and most notably the virtual, there is certainly a part of Deleuze that is hesitant to affirm, even in the realm of aesthetics, that all things boil down to materialism. To approach these issues, first, I shall discuss the direct references Deleuze makes to Proust in *The Logic of Sensation*, before retreating to *Proust and Signs* so as to face the Deleuze-Proust chimera on its own terms, rather than as the mere antithesis to the Deleuze-Bacon thesis explored in Chapter I.

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<sup>7</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 3.



Whether Deleuze is overstating the differences between Bacon and Proust and perhaps forgetting certain claims he had made in *Proust and Signs*, claims that might bring the two into cohesion and show that their aesthetics are not in opposition, is the primary experiment here. Second, one must discern the effect Félix Guattari had on Deleuze's interpretation of Proust, as evidenced by the extended edition of *Proust and Signs* and references made to Proust in *A Thousand Plateaus*.<sup>8</sup> One must be careful not to reduce Deleuze's interpretation of Proust and treat it monolithically. Principally dealing with his later interest in the faciality machine (a concept from *A Thousand Plateaus*), I shall distinguish Francis Bacon, the great dismantler of faces, from Marcel Proust, whom Deleuze and Guattari accuse of "stuff[ing] . . . characters down [into the black] hole [of subjectification]" and "plumbing the depths of black holes and composing faces."<sup>9</sup> Along with this disparity, others include the role of narration, and the incommunicability of viewpoints in Proust (primarily through the example of jealous lovers).

This last aspect enters us into the Leibnizian philosophy that Deleuze finds within Proust's work. As I argue, while the faciality machine and the problem of narration as two elements that differentiate Proust from Bacon can be resolved, the irreducibility of perspective, which is to say the chasm separating each singular, subjective viewpoint, is something in Proust that cannot be integrated into the Deleuze-Bacon framework which insists on the dissolution of the subject—the indiscernibility of self and world, the organization of the organism and the disorganization of the BwO, animal and human, material and immaterial. Yet even with all this said, there then comes along in Proust the force of involuntary memory, wherein the subject plunges into the pure past and travels

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<sup>8</sup> While I do not take them up here, there are also copious references to Proust in *Anti-Oedipus*. For example, Deleuze and Guattari explore Oedipal and anti-Oedipal forms of homosexuality in Sodom and Gomorrah.

<sup>9</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 186.

somewhere beyond consciousness. Proust is obsessed with these moments, whether in the trickling in of consciousness as one awakes from sleep at the beginning of *Swann's Way*, to the jealous lover's desire to occupy the unique point of view that emanates from the object of their desire, be it Odette or Albertine. As I hope to show, the barriers between Deleuze-Proust and Deleuze-Bacon are vulnerable to such underground passages that connect the two once again—a truly rhizomatic character, akin to how Deleuze and Guattari observe the distribution of space in Kafka's work. There is always the possibility that a door may connect a room in the house to any another. The avenues between Bacon and Proust seduce us several times to synthesize their aesthetic frameworks.

Despite the possibility of integrating Proust into the Bacon model of aesthetics, in the end it appears that the Leibnizian aspects of Proust are those that prevent him from fully conjugating with Bacon—a rather Proustian tragedy of love indeed. And, naturally, it is the Leibnizian windowless monad that offers us no escape, no trap door, to again link up underground with Bacon. It is, then, not surprising that one of Deleuze's last books, *The Fold*, turns to Leibniz and his aesthetic implications. After all, in successfully resisting the thesis found in *The Logic of Sensation*, the Leibnizianism that informed Deleuze's Proust is then given its own stage.

~ PROUST THE REVENANT ~

That Proust appears in *The Logic of Sensation* is not categorically out of place. For reasons that I address in Chapter III, Deleuze's preferred narrative device in this monograph is to compare Bacon's work to writers like Beckett, Kafka, and even Proust, just as much as to other painters. What is strange is that the majority of the nine times Deleuze refers to Proust in *The Logic of Sensation* betray a stark opposition between the two artists. As a result, Deleuze must know that he is sentencing himself to (at least) two aesthetic frameworks. On

the one hand, there is Bacon and his hysterically pre-conceptual forces that act on the body. On the other hand, there is Proust who overcodes the world with signs, faces, and signification like the paranoid despot of *A Thousand Plateaus*. Proust's is also a world of territories and the rhythms of divergent perspectives as they conjoin, to adopt some of Guattari's formulations that I focus on in Chapter III.

Proust is characterized with what I see Deleuze situating on the side of the musical pole. Recalling the parallel distinction from Chapter I between hysteria-painting and schizophrenia-music in *The Logic of Sensation*, it should also be emphasized that Deleuze thinks Proust is very much like a musician, stating:

Certainly music transverses our bodies in profound ways, putting an ear in the stomach, in the lungs and so on. It knows all about waves and nervousness. But it involves our body, and bodies in general, in another element. It strips bodies of their inertia, of the materiality of their presence: it *disembodies* bodies. We can thus speak with exactitude of a sonorous body and even of a bodily combat in music—for example, in a motif—but as Proust said, it is an immaterial and disembodied combat ‘in which there subsists not one scrap of inert matter refractory to the mind.’ In a sense, music begins where painting ends, and this is what is meant when one speaks of the superiority of music.<sup>10</sup>

I cited elements of this quote last chapter and there, as now, sense its difficulty. Given the emphasis on the body conceptualized by both schizophrenia and hysteria, one would think they should equally be called expressions of the same materialism. Time and again in *The Logic of Sensation*, however, Deleuze distinguishes the two.

Things get even more complicated when one returns to *Proust and Signs*, where Deleuze emphasizes the value of a hysteric conception of the body vis-à-vis Proust. Deleuze quotes Proust—“Words themselves instructed me only if they were interpreted in the fashion of a rush of blood to the face of a person who is disturbed, or again in the fashion of a sudden silence [III, 88]”—before adding that in this instance it is “no surprise that the

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<sup>10</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 47.

hysteric makes his body speak. He rediscovers a primary language, the true language of symbols and hieroglyphs. His body is an Egypt.”<sup>11</sup> Nondiscursive signs, hieroglyphs, and Egyptology are all themes that will be returned to, and the presence of each in Proust punches a hole in the barrier that separates Proust from Bacon.<sup>12</sup> In *Proust and Signs*, Deleuze emphasizes that Proust is an Egyptian, and in *The Logic of Sensation* that Bacon is as well, although for some perplexing reason Deleuze does not bring them together on this point even in the slightest.

The main quality that Deleuze uses to bring Proust and Bacon together is involuntary memory and the ability for us to get at that which is neither figurative nor abstract. Unsurprisingly, this connection comes more from John Russell’s book on Francis Bacon, though Deleuze makes use of it. Something would not have sat right had it come directly from Deleuze who boldly states in *Proust and Signs* that *In Search of Lost Time* is not about memory. Nevertheless, Deleuze builds on Russell’s invocation of Proust, noting that “Proust did not want an abstract literature that was too voluntary (philosophy), any more than he wanted a figurative, illustrative, or narrative literature that merely told a story.”<sup>13</sup> It is the Figure that Proust wants, and he achieves this by “coupl[ing] together two sensations that existed at different levels of the body and that seized each other like two wrestlers, the present sensation and the past sensation, in order to make something appear that was irreducible to either of them, irreducible to the past as well as to the present.”<sup>14</sup> This discontinuity between the present and the past marks the Bergsonian virtual that informs Deleuze’s philosophy. Waves and resonances are created between sensations and Deleuze

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<sup>11</sup> Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, 93.

<sup>12</sup> Yet let us not forget that these are lowly signs according to Proust, “sensuous signs,” as Deleuze calls them. These signs are far too tied to bodies. What Proust strives for in art “is the splendid final unity of an immaterial sign and a spiritual meaning” (Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, 86).

<sup>13</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 56.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

sees in Bacon as in Proust a kind of differential calculus at work in sensation. Forms appear, yet only as the result of unformed intensities as they rise to the surface. The work of art points to this very contingency, of the thunderbolt and its dark precursor, to recall Deleuze's image from *Difference and Repetition*.<sup>15</sup>

If some differential combination of memory and a present sense impression is a way of harnessing the forces of sensation, it is nevertheless one among several modes of doing so. For this reason Deleuze states Proust's work is an apprenticeship in signs rather than in memory or lost time. The latter concepts are just ways of getting at the former, which is all about reaching the essence of subjectivity and truth through the interpretation of a worldview. In the second and third editions of *Proust and Signs*, the motif Deleuze uses to define this process is the spider. He declares that Proust's narrator is a spider: limited like the tick for its lack of perception, and only able to sense its prey through the vibration of its web. The fly only comes into its world by first being mediated through the vibrations of the web; it must speak the language of the spider to enter into its world. The fly can be placed before the spider and the eyes of the predator will not realize this is its prey. This closed world of the spider is the perfect image for Proust's narrator who is, like the spider, incapable of accessing signs outside its subjective world. The spider can only access the fly's being *as* a spider, just as a lover cannot access their partner's being *as* the object of desire—only as the active subject.

However, that this process of accessing the Other acts through sensations is what brings Proust the closest he can possibly be to Bacon; that the truth Proust finds is individual and ultimately incommunicable between all our worlds is what takes him once again away. Framing it in the language of Kant's third Critique, Bacon's use of sensation has

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<sup>15</sup> Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 145.

the potential to achieve a kind of *sensus communis*. The vibrations of matter, while its intensities may change, acts on us in one univocal way—simply with different modes of expression as Spinoza would put it. Proust does share this goal of achieving a *sensus communis*. His whole project lies in entering into another point of view. But the impossibility of doing so is then what forces him to create a work of art, which engages in a spiritual truth. Channelling Proust, Deleuze says that “[t]he superiority of art over life consists in this: all the signs we meet in life are still material signs, and their meaning, because it is always in something else, is not altogether spiritual.”<sup>16</sup> Perhaps this transcendence of the work of art is achievable in a way that getting beyond sensation, and the arbitrariness and misinterpretations of signs that pervade our being, is not.

~ OVERCODED FACES ~

One can hazard a guess that Francis Bacon is turning in his grave at the thought that our cellular devices can be unlocked not just with a passcode or fingerprint, but rather now by simply looking at it. *What is more you than your face?*, the Apple gods announce. A process of selection is at work, sorting out the owner from the imposter through our facial codes. While there is something to be said for how these machines read our faces with perceptive algorithms that certainly get beyond the visible surface and are able to read our every pore, there is still a fixation on good and bad models, likeness and dissimilarity, that grounds this technology. Likewise, the rhizomatic powers of the Internet have been re-territorialized by selective, highly personalized newsfeeds and ad content. Its powers of connection have in fact closed off our worlds even further, though here I digress. What matters in the first example is that the face has been made infinitely small. Deleuze and Guattari cannot be

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<sup>16</sup> Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, 41.

clearer: the molecular and the molar do not necessarily equate to the imperceptibly small and to visible, surface-level aggregations.

It is also problematic simply to divide them up into the good (molecular) and the bad (molar), since the two are always already mixed together and there are plenty of molar forces that are able to take on symbiotic relationships with molecular, rhizomatic ones. Take the mycorrhizal relationship between certain fungi and tree roots. The arborescent growth of the tree reaches upward to the sky and gains carbohydrates through the process of photosynthesis. It passes some of these on to the mushrooms which have never seen, and never will see, sunlight. In exchange, the fungi pass on the courtesy of added water retention for the tree and disease-fighting chemicals. No doubt this exhibits the becoming-fungus of the vascular tree and the becoming-tree of the mushroom. The key is not to deny fixed forms, but to harness the forces capable of making more and more connections. In this way Deleuze and Guattari propose “a logic of the AND.”<sup>17</sup>

What is problematic about the overcoding of faces though is how they negate this kind of growth by stymieing possible connections. One of the central misfortunes of Proust’s narrator is that his loves all seem to be repetitions of a past one. A cyclical repetition girds his ability to desire. As Daniel W. Smith summarizes, “the hero’s various loves (for Gilberte, Mme. De Guermantes, Albertine) indeed form a series in which each successive love adds its minor differences and contrasting relations to the preceding loves.”<sup>18</sup> This is not some path that leads back to the Oedipal mother, however, since “his mother is *already* a repetition of other adult loves (Proust’s hero replays with his mother Swann’s passion for Odette), and the mother’s love in turn refers to repetitions he has not himself

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<sup>17</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 25.

<sup>18</sup> Daniel W. Smith, *Essays on Deleuze* (Great Britain: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 23.

experienced.”<sup>19</sup> Something in this repetition should worry us. It neglects the very novelty from which love is born in this first place. Proust is correct when he acknowledges that what draws us into love is not just the image of the beloved, but precisely that they see us from a world that is not our own. They offer up a vantage point that we so desire.

There is something here quite like the schizophrenic potential to take in signs. Recalling Artaud’s experience, signs do not clearly demarcate their objects of reference.<sup>20</sup> Rather, they rise from an unformed realm of possible meanings, and this inability to tie down interpretation allows them to excite a kind of painful pleasure. As a reminder though, this is more so the potential of the schizophrenic and not a description of universal actual experience. Naturally, it was not always achieved by Artaud who was more often than not simply subjected to pain by his condition. The Body without Organs is quite tricky, and entering into it all at once can simply be suicide. As Deleuze and Guattari prescribe in *A Thousand Plateaus*, one cannot overstate

how necessary caution is, the art of dosages, since overdose is a danger. You don’t [make yourself a Body without Organs] with a sledgehammer, you use a very fine file. You invent self-destructions that have nothing to do with the death drive. Dismantling the organism has never meant killing yourself, but rather opening the body to connections that presuppose an entire assemblage, circuits, conjunction, levels and thresholds, passages and distributions of intensity, and territories and deterritorializations measured with the craft of a surveyor.<sup>21</sup>

Yet still, connection and the possibility of generating the new (i.e., the event) must gather its energy from this realm of the Body without Organs. It even happens for Proust, though he finds in the call from the lover’s gaze something transcendent, a good object of the heights and not a rumbling of the depths.<sup>22</sup> This is what Christian Kerslake in “Desire and the Dialectics of Love” calls Deleuze and Guattari’s “attack on the notion that it is possible to

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 82-93.

<sup>21</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 160.

<sup>22</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 189-90.



extrapolate a transcendent object from the process of desire [which] . . . originates in Deleuze's Proustian analysis of the experience of love."<sup>23</sup> Kerslake adds that, "Deleuze would agree that desire *does* lead towards love but would disagree that love is the achievement of mutual recognition; in fact love is the first real encounter with an other, it does not lead towards mutual recognition, but towards increasing jealousy and deception."<sup>24</sup> Deleuze's representation of Proustian love as that of a jealous lover should recall a similar characterization of philosophers that he makes throughout his writing, though most explicitly in "Plato and the Simulacrum," which bookends *The Logic of Sense*. The philosopher is like the suitor who must pass through the unparticipated (father) to get to the participated (daughter/fiancée), thus making them a kind of claimant. For example, the unparticipated idea of justice is accessed through a participation in the quality of justice, and the claimant is the one who is just in action. By introducing the false claimant or simulacrum into this structure, Deleuze is equally so challenging the notion that philosophy is this kind of love affair. But what then is to go in its place?

Although it gathers its greatest intensity in *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze's alternative to the jealous lover/philosopher finds its roots in *Proust and Signs* and expresses an idea similar to the immediacy of sensation found in *The Logic of Sensation*. The idea can be put succinctly: truth does not find the one who looks for it, but acts as an unexpected event upon us. Here Deleuze is stating that the jealous lover who seeks out, for instance, the signs of his lover's betrayal will find just this *even if* it does not actually exist. Plagued by a dogmatic image of thought, the mind is overcome with false objects that cloud its ability to get at the truth (and by the truth let us state, quite broadly, that it is becoming, the event, and the simulacrum—

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<sup>23</sup> Christine Kerslake, "Desire and the Dialectics of Love: Deleuze, Canguilhem, and the Philosophy of Desire," in *Deleuze and Psychoanalysis: Philosophical Essays on Deleuze's Debate with Psychoanalysis*, edited by Leen de Bolle (Belgium: Leuven University Press, 2010), 63.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

all really different ways of saying the new). By way of a similarly oriented critique, Friedrich Nietzsche states in “On Truth and Lying in a Non-moral Sense” that:

If someone hides something behind a bush, looks for it in the same place and then finds it there, his seeking and finding is nothing much to boast about; but this is exactly how things are as far as the seeking and finding of “truth” within the territory of reason is concerned. If I create the definition of a mammal and then, having inspected a camel, declare, “Behold, a mammal,” then a truth has certainly been brought to light, but it is of limited value, by which I mean that it is anthropomorphic through and through and contains not a single point which could be said to be “true in itself,” really and in a generally valid sense, regardless of mankind.<sup>25</sup>

Truth, if it exists, cannot be something sought out. Such a quest can only be veiled with the curtains of expectation, cliché, and judgement. These are the great idols Nietzsche works against, and they are also undoubtedly those battled by Deleuze, Bacon, and Artaud. For them all, the force of truth must somehow act directly on us. Deleuze states this explicitly in *Proust and Signs*: “We must first experience the violent effect of a sign, and the mind must be ‘forced’ to seek the sign’s meaning.”<sup>26</sup> A little while before this claim, we also learn that “Truth depends on an encounter with something that forces us to think and to seek the truth . . . Precisely, it is the sign that constitutes the object of an encounter and works this violence upon us.”<sup>27</sup> If, then, Bacon demonstrates the violence of sensation, Proust might then be read as offering “violence in thought.”<sup>28</sup> In one of his many critiques of the dogmatic image of thought, which is to say the belief that rational thought and the human mind are naturally fit to decipher truth, Deleuze claims, “the philosopher . . . is a thinker who presupposes in himself the benevolence of thought, who attributes to thought the natural love of truth and to truth the explicit determination of what is naturally worked out

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<sup>25</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, “On Truth and Lying in a Non-moral Sense,” in *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, ed. Raymond Geuss and Ronald Speirs, trans. Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 147.

<sup>26</sup> Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, 23.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

by thought.”<sup>29</sup> When the philosopher/lover becomes open to the signs that beckon one as if from another world, therein they find the one possible path to truth.

~THE FACE OF THE LOVER~

As we learn from Francis Bacon, one of the barriers that cordons us from getting at the truth of sensation (he calls these sensations “matters of fact”) is the face. Proust’s work can be read as an immanent critique of the jealous lover and of the prejudices of thought that limit our access to the world outside us.<sup>30</sup> This would, however, require a fairly generous reading of Proust’s intention. Such an interpretation requires a certain level of generosity given that Deleuze and Guattari state in *A Thousand Plateaus* that Proust is one of the chief authorities on generating the machine of faciality. According to this characterization, Proust finds a face in all things, making all objects a marker of subjectification. Allow us to unpack this claim.

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari offer the image of the despotic king.<sup>31</sup> The way this figure organizes signs is by marking each with a face that stands in for himself. One thinks of the face of royalty on money, magazines, and so on. The despotic king overcodes the world with his face because all signs are meant to lead back to him. As Deleuze and Guattari recount, money originally existed simply as a tribute to pay to the king, and surely one must give back, for example, what is Caesar’s unto Caesar. Similarly, the key crisis for the despotic king is one of interpretation. His signs refer back to a definite desire and the messages he sends out into the world reflect this desire clearly. But his reign has no boundaries and radiates out in concentric circles. In a broken telephone-like process, the signs become harder to denote. The king’s personnel seek to enforce these signs, though, as

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>30</sup> As Chapter III explores, entering this other world, which most notably envelops animal territories, the cosmos, and the rhythms of nature, is the aesthetic focus of music and one of the ways in which, for Deleuze, Proust explains music and music explains Proust.

<sup>31</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 111-16.

Wittgenstein famously avows, no sign is intrinsically meaningful and it will eventually fall into misinterpretation as the king soon realizes. This crisis is inherently linked to the machine of faciality. The king's face, which he stamps on everything, is supposed to speak for itself. Yet it is, in the end, a sign that comes as if from another world. Such a process is intrinsic to Proustian desire, since the hero wants to access his desire from the point of view of the other. The despotic king does this as well, and the thought of his sign appearing as anything other than what he intended plummets him into paranoia. Thus he overcodes the world with repetitive signs made in the likeness of his image, though these can only ever fall into self-referential meaninglessness or misinterpretation, all the while negating the original possibility of perceiving oneself as if from a gaze outside oneself. In contrast, what Deleuze sees Proust as reaching for in art is this unity of the self-same sign—a sign whose reference is itself, yet in a way that is neither tautological nor nonsensical: “Art,” Deleuze states, “is a veritable transmutation of substance. By it, substance is spiritualized and physical surroundings dematerialized in order to refract essence, that is, the quality of an original world.”<sup>32</sup>

For Proust's narrator, a similar paranoia to the despot seems to be at work in the repetition of his loves. No matter the novelty that each brings, they all somehow get placed within a series of past loves. There is a level of expectation and signification that resists the new, and, as I shall now elaborate on, Deleuze and Guattari argue that Proust's overcoding of the hero's world with faces is a chief reason for this barrier to the new. After describing this critique, I explain the destruction of the face that is part and parcel of Francis Bacon's artwork. In attempt to bring Proust and Bacon together again, I employ a few examples from *In Search of Lost Time*, as brought to my attention by Thomas Baldwin's aforementioned

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<sup>32</sup> Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, 47.

work. If Proust is not entirely, as Deleuze and Guattari contend, trapped in the machine of faciality, this once again offers a possible reintegration of their aesthetic systems.

~ PLUMBING THE DEPTHS ~

In their apprenticeship in signs, one of the actions that Proust and his hero repeat is the inscription of faces on all things. Though this is the power and the beauty of something like the madeleine—that is, the fact that our memories are inscribed in the objects outside of ourselves—there is still a danger of being closed off from the world when desire and meaning (sense) take on a specific form. This is, after all, the danger of any ideology, as well as an important rejoinder to the Oedipal complex. If you start looking for the desire of the mother everywhere, that is likely what you will find.

The machine of faciality is, at its core, a process of sameness that integrates things by selecting and sorting what fits into our world and what does not. It is ultimately a process of fitting a norm, as in when one excludes others based on categories such as race or gender, establishing a line between similarity and difference. Recalling the aforementioned despotic king from *A Thousand Plateaus*, the face is a kind of icon through which all other signs (at least as the despot intends) will refer back to. Beyond the face lies the unwavering desire of the despot. For example, think of the master signifier evident in the phrase “because I am the king”—an argument-ending, self-evident phrase that stops the circulation of meaning and signs. In the *Search*, Deleuze and Guattari realize that Odette’s face follows this despotic structure. For Swann, everything starts to revolve around Odette’s face. All the world’s signs start to relate in some way to Odette. This totalizing force, however, has its limit. As there is an inherently paranoid-despotic structure that it follows—a need to refer everything back to a master signifier like Odette’s face—the smallest tear in its consistency leads the jealous lover into a frenzy. The face is then turned away from. Deleuze and Guattari identify this

turning away from the face as connected to the postsignifying regime.<sup>33</sup> Signs once again enter a free play as Swann doubts Odette's love, suspecting Odette of treachery and betrayal, of turning away from him. Brent Adkins lists some of Swann's neuroses: "Swann turns away from Odette in order to discover what she's hiding from him. Why is he forbidden to see her on certain days? What really happened in Marseille? . . . [All this leads Swann to] lurking outside the wrong apartment and knocking on a stranger's window."<sup>34</sup> When his love for Odette finally fades, signs break from their despotic chain.<sup>35</sup>

The face looms over Swann and pervades the majority of signifiers in the *Search*. It is, after all, a tale of love, and there is something about love especially that gravitates all signs toward the face. It is no surprise, then, that Deleuze and Guattari's prime example for the face is Christ's—his religion is after all said to be a religion of love.<sup>36</sup> All these black holes that pull us into the subjectification of faces demonstrate a stark contrast with what we encounter in Francis Bacon. His artwork intends to annihilate the face, and accomplishes this by demonstrating the process of disintegration and decay, instead of simply plummeting directly into abstract non-representation. This is critically important for Deleuze and Bacon; both acknowledge that we must witness the destruction of signification or else risk it not in fact disappearing. One might compare this to the importance of seeing the villain of a film die on screen; otherwise there remains the possibility of their return. Now, the face is something that always returns, and this is the crux of re-territorialization. What one must attempt, however, is to create new faces before they once again fall into repetition and master signifiers (as in Proust) or cliché (as in Bacon). Yet it remains to be seen whether

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<sup>33</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 119-30.

<sup>34</sup> Brent Adkins, *Deleuze and Guattari's A Thousand Plateaus: A Critical Introduction* (Great Britain: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), 116.

<sup>35</sup> It even seems as though Swann is on his way to the asignifying regime, where language has a direct impact on the body. Again Proust curls back into the Bacon model of sensation.

<sup>36</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 167.

characterizing Proust as a real constructor of faces is entirely fair, since in Swann's case we truly witness a destruction of Odette's face as master signifier.

Thomas Baldwin brings attention to several instances where Proust effectively presents the destruction of faces. In doing so, Baldwin emphasizes that the Bacon-Proust dichotomy, as produced through the machine of faciality, is not an effective tool for marking their differences. Just as Bacon is never intent on rendering the whole face destroyed and prefers more to display a process of becoming and erasure, so too might we call Proust a similar type of demiurge. Baldwin illuminates this destruction of the face:

While Proust, according to the writers of *Mille Plateaux*, stuffs his characters into the 'trous noirs' of a 'visage-bunker', Bacon, according to the Deleuze of *Logique de la sensation*, is the supreme painter of heads, the destroyer of faces. But things are not as stable, or as clearly opposed, as they might seem. The spectacle of the 'Bal de têtes' can be understood as the epitome of, or even the blueprint for, the Baconesque defacialization that Deleuze so admires. Recalling Swann's fascination at the faces distorted by monocles at the Marquise de Saint-Euverte's (he subsequently dreams of a facially disfigured Madame Verdurin and of gouging out Odette's eyes, the narrator, having returned to the 'fête travestie' that is the 'matinée chez la princesse de Guermantes', is astounded by the insect-like metamorphoses, 'la prodigieuse transformation de visage' of his former acquaintances. He reflects on the relationship between words and things, faces and names; names are disconnected from their habitual faces and a world of new words can finally appear.<sup>37</sup>

Naturally, this disruption of the face's despotic signification is what gives Swann the ability to connect with the world in new ways. Sceptics to these counter-examples might address the fact that these destructions of the face are few and far between in the *Search*, albeit inevitable moments given the sheer volume of Proust's work. Even the purest of faces have their blemishes every once in a while, they might claim. Still, one must realize that the objection raised by Baldwin is one Deleuze must have known about, since Guattari himself proposed it in "Swann's Love as Semiotic Collapse" from *The Machinic Unconscious*.

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<sup>37</sup> Thomas Baldwin, *The Picture as Spectre in Diderot, Proust, and Deleuze* (Taylor & Francis Group, 2011), 107-8.

“Swann’s Love as Semiotic Collapse” charts several instances where the face is no longer the means through which the world appears to Proust’s narrator. Guattari outlines two possible avenues created by faciality: on the one hand, it “disrupt[s] the organization of other semiotic components and develop[s] ‘liberating’ transformations in Swann’s life;” and on the other, it “open[s] up obsessive and repressive reterritorializations (But it is above all this second perspective which will prevail).”<sup>38</sup> In stating the primacy of the second force in Proust, Guattari seems in agreement with Deleuze’s characterization. However, and this is of paramount importance, Guattari adds that “faciality traits . . . end up losing *all* their effectiveness” [my emphasis].<sup>39</sup> For Guattari, Proust is well aware of this failure. In fact, the whole second half of the novel on Swann demonstrates a transversal, maddening aspect of becoming. What Proust demonstrates is the fragility of organization. While the “little phrase” of Vinteuil’s music for example seems inescapably to recall Odette’s face, the transversal element presented by Proust, according to Guattari, is that somehow this image of thought will suddenly end. Not only is this consistent with Bacon’s interpretation of the image of thought (Form as he calls it), it is his aesthetic *par excellence*.

In framing Proust as a more intentional destroyer of faces than at first meets the eye, Guattari is opening up what we are led to believe is the primary disjunction between Proust and Bacon, as each is presented in Deleuze’s aesthetic schema. As if coming from Bacon himself, Guattari writes of Proust’s interest “in the mutations of perceptive components, in the phenomena of the magnification, displacement, overlapping, acceleration, or deceleration

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<sup>38</sup> Félix Guattari, “Swann’s Love as Semiotic Collapse,” in *The Machinic Unconscious: Essays in Schizoanalysis*, translated by Taylor Adkins (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2011), 236.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*



... of sensorial coordinates.”<sup>40</sup> There is in this sensation what Guattari calls its “*internal point*” which is his way of explaining the “existential consistency of such unclassifiable realities.”<sup>41</sup> Put another way, despite the fact that sensations hit us all differently, there is still behind them an underlying molecular reality of chaos that we all share. This is the crux of Guattari’s Spinozism, which interestingly enough seems to guide his reading of Proust. Though Deleuze is just as much a Spinozist in his writing, when it comes to Proust, Deleuze could not be more Leibnizian.

The difference in Deleuze and Guattari’s respective approaches to Proust, as also the difference between Leibniz and Spinoza in general, may be clarified using the concept of expression. This is to say, and as I have been alluding to, what makes Proust such a Leibnizian is the abyssal separation between perspectives. For Spinoza as for Leibniz, there is but one world—and though it is overrun with the problem of the infinite, it is all still wrapped up within God or nature. Yet where Spinoza’s modes of existence establish a radical continuity between entities, Leibniz’s is grounded on the notion of a closed perspective. The whole world is folded in each point of view, though there is something irreconcilable between them derived from the fact that each monad is causally independent. As Leibniz claims, the monad must be independent insofar as its being mirrors its creator. Conversely, Spinoza finds free will and contingency abhorrent notions, born simply out of our inability to determine a cause. These are the fundamental first principles that send Leibniz and Spinoza down different paths. As each might apply to the work of Proust, the question is to what extent our worlds interact with each other’s? The Guattari-Spinoza reading interprets the transversal breakdowns of our categories (such as faciality) as those moments of the real cutting through our world, as Lacan might also have put it. Worlds

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<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 232.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 233.

demonstrate that they are entirely connected. The Deleuze-Leibniz interpretation insists rather on the plurality of monads, and how each cannot come into contact with another and yet, paradoxically, contains the totality of the world in itself. There is in fact here in Leibniz an early idea of the unconscious: the monad contains the totality of the world, though the majority of it appears as indistinct waves and murmurs below the surface of consciousness.

In one of my own early encounters with Leibniz's work, a professor once described Leibniz's world to me as a series of strings that connect with all the parts of the world. While the lines reach out infinitely and we cannot perceive their every connection, they are all woven together and follow the laws of sufficient reason and compossibility. This professor also disliked Deleuze and Guattari quite strongly, although I am confident he would accept the beauty of these Leibnizian strings in Deleuze's reading of Proust. As Deleuze says, and as I have mentioned above, the narrator is a spider who does not relate to other individuals but who contains each relation by way of a vibration made on its web (of strings).

~ EGYPT RISES UP ~

Though I shall ultimately conclude that, for Deleuze, this Leibnizian aspect is what keeps Proust from fitting within the Bacon aesthetic, there is another perplexing similarity in how Deleuze describes their art. The striking resemblance is that Deleuze describes each as an Egyptian. For Deleuze, Bacon is an Egyptian artist since his work takes on a haptic quality, blending together the senses of touch and sight. Through bas-relief techniques that give the work of art an absence of depth, all its parts rest on an uncoordinated surface directly in front of the viewer. This is also what Deleuze is getting at when he discusses the landscape/geography distinction in *A Thousand Plateaus* and *The Logic of Sensation*. Where geography involves a separated viewer who surveys [from the French *survol*] and gazes down

upon fixed coordinates, the landscape is characterized by an inherent immersion wherein sensations move at an incredible speed and as if right in front of us.

Following Alois Riegl, Deleuze defines the Egyptian presentation as “*the flat surface* [his italics], which allows the eye to function like the sense of touch.”<sup>42</sup> The same applies the other way in the becoming-eye of touch. Despite Bacon’s sphinx being “scrambled, treated in a *malerisch* manner” he approaches his art as an Egyptian—one focused on bringing depth to the surface, showing depth as a surface effect, despite everything ultimately having its origin in the depths of matter.<sup>43</sup> Yet given that he remains a colourist, what Deleuze concludes is that “a new Egypt rises up, composed uniquely of color and by color, an Egypt of the accident, the accident that has itself become durable.”<sup>44</sup> An interesting point to raise briefly is the striking similarity between this aesthetic formula of accident and durability and one found in *What is Philosophy?* There, Deleuze and Guattari state that a work of art is a being of sensation, composed of affects and percepts, which in turn are the durable becomings of accidental affections and perceptions. In their words, “[w]hat is preserved—the thing or the work of art—is *a bloc of sensations, that is to say, a compound of percepts and affects*.”<sup>45</sup> Art takes the personalized, individualized affections and perceptions and makes them “independent of a state of those who experience them,” but in such a way that they “*stand up on [their] own*.”<sup>46</sup> What Cézanne, for example, critiqued in Impressionists was precisely this lack of durability; he wanted sensations that were not fragile, that could outlast the creator such as “‘the perpetuity of blood’ in Rubens.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 99.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>45</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 164.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Paul Cézanne, quoted in Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 165.

Returning to Deleuze's Bacon, in considering how uncommon references to Egyptology are in his work, it should come as a shock that the only other figure he has referred to as an Egyptian is Proust. Given the sense that he has excommunicated Proust from the Bacon aesthetic model in *The Logic of Sensation*, it is highly surprising that Proust and Bacon share such a unique trait. Their shared Egyptology demands further exploration.

When Deleuze calls Bacon an artist of Egypt, this does a great deal to bring an artist of the depths, back up to the surface. Though surface effects (meaning, interpretation, effect) are all abstract results of the machine of the depths in Deleuze's thinking, it is rather striking that Bacon's depths, at least insofar as he is an Egyptian, are equally so the result of a play of the surface. This is a highly Proustian idea of art, whose aesthetics is said to be immaterial and spiritual—qualities assigned to the surface and the heights. This seems to be the radical potential in any work of art according to Proust, namely, that it somehow wrests free of material constraints to take on immaterial resonances: time, emotion, subjectivity. That these are generated in the depths is out of the question. In line with Deleuze's thinking, it is always some sensation (be it the madeleine or the look of a lover) that excites interpretation, rather than interpretation (the surface of sense) appearing on its own. There must be some material vibration that prompts it. What is intriguing, nevertheless, is that meaning and interpretation also exist—well, subsist, if we are to be faithful to the language of *The Logic of Sense*. Matter in motion finds its way into series, repetitions bleed together to form meaning (sense).

This play of the material in the spiritual, the depth in the surface and the heights, is also the nature of montage and the selective gaze of the camera and frame. Bacon's triptychs accomplish this framing effect. Furthermore, in trying to get at the scream in itself (the scream without a face not unlike a grin without a cat) Bacon approaches the paradox of the

Kantian noumena, which is that the scream only results from the play of two distinct rhythms. This resistance to the noumena explains the prevalence of wrestling bodies and blended figures in his work. Moreover, it explains why even his solitary portraits seem pluralistic. The faces are always multiple as if two distinct personalities were trying to escape the flesh. This accounts for Bacon's play of signs, and I shall now account for Proust's before explaining how they come together under the shared identity of an Egyptian. Finally, the division created between Bacon as a painter of the depths and Proust as a writer of the surface (though I prefer to say musician of the heights) is once again pierced with holes.<sup>48</sup>

What takes place at the surface is meaning and Proust's apprenticeship in signs depends primarily on the fact that truth is replaced by interpretation. A sign offers itself as something to be deciphered—it is a hieroglyph. There is something important about the hieroglyph because it is an image that contains its own meaning. Contrast this with standard alphabets where the relation between signifier and signified is arbitrary (there may be a few exceptions, for example, the letter o).<sup>49</sup> The hieroglyph is the beginning and end of interpretation. Meaning is extracted from all that is found within the sign and from nothing beyond it. We cannot appeal to some mental image or Idea to garner its meaning. This is what is so significant about art. There is a unique cohesion where the sign and the meaning it reveals are unveiled in one and the same gesture of interpretation enacted by the audience. For this reason does Deleuze grant a radical autonomy to art (durability as he calls it in *What is Philosophy?*). In *Proust and Signs*, he qualifies it as follows: “to the degree that we achieve art, the relation of sign and meaning becomes closer. Art is the splendid final unity of an

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<sup>48</sup> Chapter III explores this music of the heights.

<sup>49</sup> Indebted as he will later be to C.S. Peirce's semiotics in *Cinema 1* and 2, it is valuable to note that Peirce refers to the sign that contains its own meaning as an icon, and to the arbitrary relation of signifier and signified as a symbol.

immaterial sign and a spiritual meaning.”<sup>50</sup> This conflation should again recall the experience of both Artaud and Bacon. We know Deleuze prefers to call this type of art hysteric in *The Logic of Sensation*. What is more confusing, and this quote was mentioned in passing already in this chapter, is that in *Proust and Signs*, Deleuze references “the hysteric [who] makes his body speak. He rediscovers a primary language, the true language of symbols and hieroglyphs.”<sup>51</sup> The jealous lover that interprets the hieroglyph that is, for example, the look of interest, flirtation, pity, whichever it may be, must decode the hidden meaning at work within the other lover’s sign. This process, if successful, can only reveal one thing: the virtual. Beneath the facial expression is something beyond the mere reflection of an inner mental state. Rather, it is an infinite series of feelings, each with a degree of power fighting to rise to the surface like a diver running out of oxygen. Indeed just as the negation of oxygen causes the rising to the surface, so too does the negation, the withdrawing, of certain degrees of intensity result in the appearance of desire upon the lover’s face.

This Nietzschean understanding of subjectivity as a play of forces is valuable for its ability to explain the self by way of an immanent critique. Deleuze echoes Nietzsche’s underlying worldview in affirming that “*There is no Logos, there are only hieroglyphs.*”<sup>52</sup> The world does not rest upon nor emanate from heavenly Forms. Its origin is a virtual realm of difference—potential without telos, pure movement without grounding. The brilliance of Proust’s work is how he discloses this realm, and we shall soon see in Chapter III that the “floating time” found in modern music reveals just the same.

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<sup>50</sup> Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, 86.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 92-3.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

Deleuze's primary definition of the virtual in fact comes from a Proustian formula: "Real without being present, ideal without being abstract."<sup>53</sup> The Egyptology in this pertains to the idea of a surface effect. The appearance of the self from the virtual, egg-like smooth play of forces, just like the gaze of the lover, is at once distinct and obscure. A form has emerged, though it brings forth its own contingency and the indecipherability of its ground. Like the hieroglyph, what we see before us will give us access to the truth of the lover's gaze, though all the while it contains such complexity and is fuelled by unconscious and complicated processes that there is never a ground—an intention or truth—to reach. There are only deeper caves within the caves, and such is the reality of interpretation. Is not this the central lesson of deconstruction? The work calls forth an interpretation and re-interpretation, or as Deleuze prefers to call the process, "folding, unfolding, refolding."<sup>54</sup> Again, it is thoroughly Nietzschean, and Deleuze's opening chapter to *Nietzsche & Philosophy* supplements this argument from *Proust and Signs*. Just as with Proust we are caught in the chiasmus of art as interpretation and interpretation as art, so too does Nietzsche procure "philosophy's highest art—that of interpretation."<sup>55</sup>

In Nietzsche's case, Deleuze sees a perspectivism or pluralism, which in Proust takes the form of a plurality of worlds or possessivism as I call it. Remember that the world of lovers is one of possession, that the object of desire holds something of us that we reach out to, but any success in acquiring this *something* simply folds it back into our world. We want that *other* consciousness and tragically realize we only have our own. Interpretation as possession is also further explained in *Nietzsche & Philosophy*, for a "thing has as many senses

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<sup>53</sup> Marcel Proust, cited in Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, translated by Richard Howard (New York: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 61.

<sup>54</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold*, translated by Tom Conley (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 137.

<sup>55</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche & Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 4.

as there are forces capable of taking possession of it.”<sup>56</sup> When Deleuze goes on to say that “the art of interpreting must also be an art of piercing masks,” it is enticing to read Francis Bacon, the great destroyer of faces, back into the narrative.<sup>57</sup> Yet it remains the case that Proust, as it is for Nietzsche, sets forth an art of pluralism, of other worlds, masks behind masks. Bacon, however, aspires to the bedrock of molecular forces, the “matter[s] of fact.”<sup>58</sup>

~ THE REMAINDER ~

Despite the palpable affinity between Proust and Bacon that remains in spite of Deleuze’s tendency to juxtapose their aesthetic frameworks, we must nevertheless accept the irreducibility of their systems. In fact, this is what makes Deleuze’s writing on art so rich—the machine built to explain one artist cannot help but stutter when confronted with another’s work. That being said, stuttering is highly valuable and can help us to extract different motifs from an artist’s work. For example, in viewing Proust as a Baconian destructor of faces and Bacon as in search for the transcendent scream in itself, each work of art takes on an undeniable novelty. We allow it to get beyond its own limits and clichés, introducing something new into its framework. Yet still, just as there is value in the cross-fertilization at work in this Bacon-Proust chimera, it is also important to acknowledge, and build on, the uniqueness of each creator, to accept in the end that they do not speak the same language and must resort to analogy.

While Bacon was explained more or less on his own terms in Chapter I, this second chapter has done much to read Proust as Baconian. The result is fairly confounding, insofar as the very limits that Deleuze sets up between the two artists—most notably faciality and hysteria—do not cordon them as much as would be expected, especially considering that we

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>58</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 128-9.



have called into question these divisions using nothing more than Deleuze's own writing on these artists (paired, of course, with some ideas found in collaboration with Guattari and from Guattari by himself). There remains, however, a drive to explore Proust outside of the Bacon lens and the spectre of *The Logic of Sensation*. Somewhat ironically, if at the beginning of this chapter we invoked Thomas Baldwin's notion of the spectre of Proust haunting *The Logic of Sensation*, it is quite obvious that what has grown throughout this chapter is instead the spectre of Bacon on Proust. Better yet, let us call this not a spectre but a shadow. If the spectre haunts the present despite it being a thing whose place should be the past, the shadow is that which is of the present yet casts its darkness backwards. This is what *The Logic of Sensation* has done to *Proust and Signs*, and while there is a wide range of application for the former's categories and concepts to artistry other than Bacon's paintings, there is an even more diverse field of aesthetic possibilities ready to unfold in the latter. Though the hysteric violence of sensation and the destruction of faciality apply in more ways than anticipated to Proust's work, beyond these concepts lies several that seem to fit far more organically with the framework. Specifically, they are also the categories of Deleuze and Deleuze and Guattari's thinking on music that I gestured to at the start of this chapter. When exploring the concepts of rhythm, motif, and immateriality on their own terms, one not only discovers a far more fitting aesthetics for Proust, but also the development of what could very well be a Deleuzian theory of music.

*“Every closed system also communicates.”<sup>1</sup>*

### **CHAPTER III**

~WHEN THE ARTS OVERLAP~

The appeal of Deleuze’s aesthetics is the seamless connections he makes across distinct media. Literature, painting, music, and cinema are each drawn on to explain the other despite working with different functions (for example, lines and colours in painting and time- and movement-images in cinema). In fact, the arts do not exist in isolation; their differences are not quarantined and seen as reason to avoid comparison. It is this aesthetic continuum that has driven us to account for a general aesthetics in Deleuze’s thought, one that appreciates the overall function of art. As we have studied, Deleuze appears to offer just this in *The Logic of Sensation* and *What is Philosophy?* He discusses how art harnesses forces and deals with “the being of sensation,” namely affects and percepts, independent of an experiencing subject.<sup>2</sup> According to a logic common to his work on Masoch up until Bacon, art moves towards this goal by acting directly on the senses. In sum, art gathers its strength from the pre-conceptual realm of experience and the body. It tells us something unknown yet primordial about the body. At the very least, this is the wellspring of good art, art worthy of the name. It does not resort to cliché or to the expected, but rather launches us out onto something new.

Given this unnatural nuptial with the new, art uses established forms selectively and primarily as a way to show how they undergo erasure. Boundaries—be it the “stubborn geometry”<sup>3</sup> spoken of by Cézanne or the tried and true II-V-I progression across music composition—ought to exist as harbingers of revolt from the very structures they build, and

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<sup>1</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 16.

<sup>2</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia, 1994), 164.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Cézanne, quoted in Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 91.

certainly not as hypnotic appeals to stability and sameness, articulated, for example, so well by Horkheimer and Adorno's thought on the culture industry.<sup>4</sup> We should construct forms (style, genre, standard musical progressions) carefully, contingently, so that we can feel the weight of their dissolution, fulfilling what we might call the aesthetic equivalent of the sado-masochistic relation. This is to say, recalling Deleuze's finding in *Masochism: Coldness and Cruelty*, that where the masochist draws up contracts, the sadist destroys them. Art does just this with form and chaos, like strata and the Body without Organs, building up a system of rules to feel the effect of transgression.

The artist must embody this battle, generating form and order only then to disavow the rules they are following. This is, for instance, often said of the late work of John Coltrane who very well might have taken the saxophone to its absolute limit as free form overtook modal jazz with its howls-squeals and saxophonic breaths. Calling it a breath is deliberate, for it should recall the limit of language offered by Artaud's experience of nondiscursive signs.<sup>5</sup> Both Coltrane and Artaud approach this wall of chaos. Indeed this can hold true of all art; all artists harnessing the force of sensation must confront the chaos of the primary world of the senses, not just painters or musicians. Of course, one of its greatest expressions and one of Deleuze's preferred examples is the work of James Joyce and his chaosmos, demonstrating the connection between literature and chaos akin to painting's relation to it.<sup>6</sup>

Yet what this chapter shows is the intimate connection specifically drawn between Deleuze and Guattari's thought on chaos, the cosmos, and music. That is, the aesthetic implication of the cosmos applies chiefly to music in their writing on art. In explaining this, I

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<sup>4</sup> Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception," in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, ed. Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 94-136.

<sup>5</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantin V. Boundas, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 88, 193.

<sup>6</sup> Gilles Deleuze, "The Simulacrum and Ancient Philosophy," in *The Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantin V. Boundas, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 260-1.

show that where painting demonstrates the immediacy of sensation, music, under Deleuze and Guattari's conception, is aligned more with territories and refrains that can reach out onto chaos. Each of the arts has its share of chaos—defined as the realm of the senses where discrete forms have yet to impinge upon our thinking—although Deleuze and Guattari draw on music to explain chaos in the natural world, chaos *outside* ourselves, far more than the internal experience of molecular sensations demonstrated by painting.

~CHAOSMOS~

For Deleuze and Guattari, philosophy, art, and science each possess the ability to “cast planes over the chaos,” though it is quite easy from here to fall deeper, as so many creators do, into dogmatism, opinion, *Urdoxa*.<sup>7</sup> But just as much as impressing an order on chaos by “cast[ing] planes,” Deleuze and Guattari appreciate that the philosopher, artist, and scientist must “tear open the firmament and plunge into chaos.”<sup>8</sup> This double move of territorialization and deterritorialization shows that the cosmos has a certain chaos to it, chaosmos as Joyce so well put it. The world has order, though we must not elide the variable intensities that ripple through its consistencies. Deleuze and Guattari explain these intensities as follows: “[w]hat the philosopher brings back from the chaos are *variations* . . . reconnections through a zone of indistinction in a concept. The scientist brings back . . . *variables* . . . finite coordinates on a secant plane of reference. . . . [and] the artist brings back from the chaos *varieties* . . . a being of sensation.”<sup>9</sup> Deleuze and Guattari call this process of creation “the leap that leads from chaos to composition,” and great compositions find a way of showing this dual movement of chaos and cosmos in one act.

Contemplating the “violent” poetry of D.H. Lawrence, Deleuze and Guattari draw on the image of an umbrella:

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<sup>7</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 202.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 202-3.

people are constantly putting up an umbrella that shelters them and on the underside of which they draw a firmament and write their conventions and opinions. But poets, artists, make a slit in the umbrella, they tear open the firmament to let in a bit of free and windy chaos and to frame in a sudden light a vision that appears through the rent.<sup>10</sup>

It is useful to imagine the umbrellas of Francis Bacon, alluded to at the outset of Chapter I, in this light. And to make one critical distinction, let us stress that art is neither the umbrella nor the rent “but a composition of chaos that yields the vision or sensation . . . Art transforms chaotic variability into *chaoid* variety.”<sup>11</sup> This primordial unity of chaos and composition, which I also see as emblematic of the refrain of the cosmos in the milieu-territory-cosmos triune of Plateau 11 from *A Thousand Plateaus*, will be returned to further on in this chapter.

Moreover, done properly albeit carefully, the power of art lies in showing us what our bodies had but we did not know, and providing something entirely new in our bodies that we did not think possible. Spinoza’s conviction that “we do not yet know what a body is capable of” becomes a formula for Deleuzian aesthetics.<sup>12</sup> This is precisely the point in making invisible forces visible and non-sonorous forces sonorous, of rendering chaos somehow perceivable.

Just as much, art criticism shows us how we can read one medium as another, for example Francis Bacon as a writer of the body (like Artaud), or Marcel Proust as a musical composer of duration, lovers and territories (like Boulez or Messiaen, as I shall elaborate on in this chapter). Deleuze’s engagement with art masterfully crosses disciplines to illuminate what a work of art expresses.

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 203.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 204.

<sup>12</sup> Baruch Spinoza, quoted in Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson, Barbara Habberjam and Eliot Ross Albert (London: Continuum, 2006), 46.

Now although appreciating this continuum—how in Deleuze all art weaves together—has been a central goal of my work thus far, and indeed has taken us to the limit case with the ultimate disjunction between Bacon and Proust, the focus now is more to allow music to speak on its own terms. Rather than trying to explain music by way of a theory on painting (*The Logic of Sensation*), let us develop Deleuze's thought on music independent of this medium. In doing so, we shall treat music as painting's other, its *outside*, demonstrating the divergences between these two aesthetic systems and how they stand as two poles of Deleuze's system.

Through its distinct uses of time and immateriality, we reveal how music takes us somewhere painting could not go, and how Deleuze frequently turns to Proust to show us where this takes us, despite him being a writer. But yet again, that Proust is a writer and not a musician is imperative, for it once again shows Deleuze's marvellous pedagogical tendencies to transgress the confines of aesthetic discourse. Though each of the arts deals in unique ways to harness forces, there is still a blend, an assemblage of artistic tendencies, that emerges, signifying how some artists are perhaps painterly-musicians or literary-musicians. Before delving into these areas, however, allow us first to salvage in one final clearance sale certain aspects from Deleuze's thought on painting; for despite its opposition to Deleuze's thought on music, it still manages to offer a significant amount of insight into how we can understand the function of music. After all, as we have come to see, the allure of *The Logic of Sensation* is its virtuosic ability to account for art in general, despite it being an exposition on painting and even more specifically the habits of a particular artist in Francis Bacon. The seduction to keep within the confines of *The Logic of Sensation* in my second chapter still weighs heavily on us here, although we now know the system found there only takes us so

far, and that we require *Proust and Signs*, *A Thousand Plateaus*, and *What is Philosophy?* to grasp the full effect of music—the other side of aesthetics in Deleuze’s work.

~ FOLDING SIDES ~

In demonstrating Deleuze’s tendency to explain works of art by way of other media, I place him in line with an insight by Walter Benjamin, a thinker whom Deleuze certainly read, though as far as I am aware only mentions once (in *The Fold*). In an unpublished 1920 fragment, Benjamin writes of the creative artist and their relation to a work of art (their medium) as follows:

For the creative person, the medium surrounding his work is so dense that he may find himself unable to penetrate it directly . . . he may be able to penetrate it only in an indirect manner. The composer might perhaps see his music, the painter hear his picture, or the poet feel the outline of his poem when he seeks to come as close to it as possible.<sup>13</sup>

This resonates quite strongly with the aesthetic dimension of the Body without Organs I have discussed, where the “organized” relation of seeing with your eyes is transformed into something nonorganic, for example, how bats see through sound using the Doppler effect in their sonar hearing. In a similar vein, building on the work of Jakob von Uexküll, a biologist and Spinozist, Deleuze and Guattari point out “aparallel” evolutions that get beyond the standard filial descent of species.<sup>14</sup> They offer the domestic cat and the baboon as an example, where certain genetic information is transmitted from one to the other by way of a type C virus, despite the two animals never having interacted.<sup>15</sup> Through such processes, capacities are achieved that stretch beyond the limits drawn by the categories of our thinking, and moreover what is signified is a kind of prosthesis unlike organic processes and hierarchized forms that have become entrenched habit for our bodies.

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<sup>13</sup> Walter Benjamin, *Collected Writings (1913-1926)*, ed. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 235.

<sup>14</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, translated by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 10.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

In Bacon's paintings, recall his focus on what Deleuze calls a close-up vision or haptic sensation, which he defines as the ability to feel touch through sight. If the Body without Organs creates a prosthetic relation in certain cases through the overlapping of organisms or sensations, in the case of the haptic work of art, we literally feel this capacity to develop a phantom limb. The audience senses touch when really all the artist gives us is something to see. Benjamin's fragment, which explains how art criticism (especially personal artistic reflection) must resort to a kind of translation, an analogical or metaphorical explanation of the artwork's truth, encapsulates Deleuze's aesthetic theory as well. This thread will be picked back up as we explain how to read Proust as a musician and Bacon as a writer. But allow us now to turn to the critical distinction between painting and music presented in *The Logic of Sensation* before providing several key concepts across Deleuze and Guattari's writing on music to understand its aesthetic quality more directly.

The topic of music makes two important appearances in *The Logic of Sensation*. There is of course the relation of music to schizophrenia that has plagued both my chapters. I have oft repeated Deleuze's claim that "music begins where painting ends . . . giv[ing] a disembodied and dematerialized body to the most spiritual of entities . . . This is why music does not have hysteria as its clinical essence, but is confronted more and more with a galloping schizophrenia."<sup>16</sup> Then there is another reference, this time to a kind of instrument: the synthesizer. In Chapter I, we addressed Deleuze's distinction between analogical and digital synthesizers and his claim that painting is the most analogical art form given its immediacy and modularity when it comes to sensation. It is perplexing because Deleuze thus uses a musical example in the synthesizer all the while claiming that its truest form actually occurs in painting. As we should now be aware, this deferral of an analogy—

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<sup>16</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 47.



how painting is the truest form of something musical—is essential to the relation between art forms. It is a perplexity that will carry Deleuze until the end of his life’s work and his final aesthetic monograph in *The Fold*. There, Deleuze turns to the Baroque and in part the figure of Gian Lorenzo Bernini, famous for the *bel composto* or the unification of the arts.<sup>17</sup> The univocity of being that Deleuze defended his entire *oeuvre* turns in part to the univocity of the arts and the Baroque commitment to their overlapping and communication.

Yet before his study of the Baroque, Deleuze was already unearthing the intricate boundaries between each of the arts. Principally, I argue, the way in which each medium communicates with its other can be understood by way of the similarities and differences between painting and music. As in *The Logic of Sensation*, it is the music of the synthesizer (in its analogical and digital form) that does much to explain the two media.

~SYNTHESIZERS: ANALOG AND DIGITAL~

Before its cameo in *The Logic of Sensation*, the synthesizer makes frequent appearance in Deleuze and Guattari’s work, primarily *A Thousand Plateaus*. As Alexander R. Galloway, Alexei Monroe, and Martin Scherzinger have all independently argued, there is a radical affinity between Deleuze and Guattari as thinkers and the synthesizer as an instrument. This connection is not just cultural or historical (seeing as the writers and the instrument are to a certain extent emblematic of the 1970s) but also philosophically. As Scherzinger notes in his essay, “Musical Modernism in the Thought of *Mille Plateaux*, and Its Twofold Politics,” while the “informing social context for [*A Thousand Plateaus*] may have been the uprising in Paris a decade earlier [May 1968], the book’s informing technical principle was a new electronic instrument, a piano keyboard-based musical apparatus . . . commonly known as the

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<sup>17</sup> While Bernini gives one of the greatest human examples of the total artwork, Deleuze and Guattari also inform us that certain birds like *Scenopoetes dentirostris* that mark their territory with “colors, postures, and sounds . . . [are] complete artist[s] . . . that sketch out a total work of art.” (Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 184).

*synthesizer*.”<sup>18</sup> Appealing for its ease of use and affordability (a slightly more modern equivalent for us might be the democratization of electronic and hip-hop music brought about by Roland’s TR-808 drum machine), the synthesizer also stands on a more conceptual level as “a metaphorical model for a way of thinking that replaces Kant’s *a priori* synthetic judgment.”<sup>19</sup> Scherzinger continues, if the synthesizer is at its core an *amalgamation*, insofar as it operates by “blending signals of different frequencies,” it breaks with the common philosophical schema of form and matter.<sup>20</sup> What the synthesizer marks for Deleuze and Guattari is a mobility and consistency offered to thought. The “thought synthesizer,” as they call it in *A Thousand Plateaus*, is in other words the rhizomatic potential in philosophical inquiry.<sup>21</sup> Certain connections seen as *a priori* and essential—be it the Oedipal complex or the arborescent nature of thought from Descartes to Hegel—unfold, being met with escape routes in the form of new modes of production.

The monophonic element of many synthesizers, for instance, activated several miraculous tendencies in music that ruptured how we conceive of arpeggios. It paradoxically separated out chords into their fundamental, singular elements, all the while doing so with bizarre additions made to the frequency, resonance, and other sound modulations that demonstrated how the sound was always in some way plural. Furthermore, much like postmodern architecture where buildings appear to be made inside-out with pipes, wiring, and ducts completely visible, the synthesizer is famous for its machinic sound, as if one can hear the very clicks and hums, the metallic white noise, of this computer-like instrument.

Alexei Monroe correctly notes that, with Deleuze and Guattari’s conviction that music depends on making the inaudible into something that can be heard, “the electronic

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<sup>18</sup> Martin Scherzinger, “Musical Modernism in the Thought of *Mille Plateaux*, and Its Twofold Politics,” in *Perspectives of New Music* vol. 46.2 (2008), 131.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 343.

musician's sound palette . . . include[s] not just the mechanical noise aestheticized by the Futurists and their successors in industrial music, but the normally non-audible or super-audible 'noise' of the digital age: the sounds of hard drives and system codes."<sup>22</sup> But if the synthesizer is so new and unprecedented for these features, and belongs to the function of music, how is it the case that in *The Logic of Sensation* Deleuze makes use of it to explain Bacon's painting? It is a comparison further confused by how adamant Deleuze is in *The Logic of Sensation* that painting and music stand in opposition. Stating that music begins where painting ends, Deleuze presents three apparent binaries between these art forms: the hysteric vs. the schizophrenic, the material vs. the immaterial, the inner molecule and the external cosmos. With such dichotomies in place, does it make sense for him to use the synthesizer to explain painting?

Before turning to this question, I wish to add one final dichotomy, which I call the communicable vs. the incommunicable. Following Deleuze's reading of Proust's work as a representation of the incommunicability of perspectives, and his reading of Bacon as signifying the essence of shared experience (the brute matter of the earth we all share), we thus find yet another disjunction in Deleuze's aesthetics. While I do not consider this final dichotomy to translate all that well into painting (communicability) and music (incommunicability), and just to re-emphasize, the first two dichotomies (hysteria/schizophrenia, material/immaterial) do match up nicely, I nevertheless find this *sensus communis* in Deleuze's aesthetics rather important as well. As Deleuze argues in *What is Philosophy?* one of the central problems art deals with is perspective.

The merit of exploring communicability in art (*sensus communis*, Kant's idea of common sense; the claim that our aesthetic tastes are sharable) is that Deleuze addresses

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<sup>22</sup> Alexei Monroe, "Mille Plateaux: Deleuzoguattarian Praxis and Electronic Music," (presentation, Theory and Analysis Graduate Study (TAGS), King's College, London, May 27, 2000).

analog and digital synthesizers in *The Logic of Sensation* to account for just this aspect of aesthetic experience. While this is not utterly apparent on the surface, tracing the use of these terms (analog and digital) in Deleuze's work reveals this role. What this then shows us is why a seemingly musical concept (the *outside* of painting according to Deleuze) is used in a discussion of painting. After settling this apparent contradiction (how music seems to be used to explain painting), I then turn to Deleuze's thought on music more generally and the role it plays in his interpretation of Proust. This will also give us greater insight into how the arts can be used to explain one another and the networks Deleuze makes in his work: how music is rarely used to explain painting, but takes on a fundamental role in explaining literature, and in turn how certain aspects of literature (Artaud, Masoch, Sade) can explain painting rather effectively. We observe this in the case of Francis Bacon and the impressionist lineage he stems from. We may again note the striking similarity between Deleuze's *Masochism* formula of language working directly on the body and painting working directly on the senses. This does not therefore mean that certain aesthetic media must correspond and communicate with each other more than others—that composers, for example, have a profound understanding of literature but occupy a paradigm that does not translate to thinking about cinema. After all, the profound effects music can have on conceptualizing movement, emotion, and narrative plot prove that the opposite is true. To say that certain arts gravitate more to one another, as Deleuze argues painting and music do not, is to admire specific points of resonance across disciplines and to observe the powerful tropes at work in Deleuze's thinking. This should also not deny any potential points of contact music and painting may end up making. It is simply that Deleuze has pedagogically separated the two and feels they rarely speak the same language.

Yet as for how the analog and digital synthesizer—seemingly musical concepts—are

used to explain painting, Alexander R. Galloway relieves us of our confusion in arguing that, while it appears to be the case, this connection is not exactly one between music and painting. Since Deleuze situates music and painting as oppositional, Galloway's argument comes as a relief in upholding the consistency of the two "poles" in Deleuze's aesthetic schema. Rather than it being a musical connection *per se*, Galloway suggests we turn to Deleuze's essay, "Postscript on the Societies of Control," to understand the greater meaning behind the analog and the digital. While commenting on a particular contemporary technology (the computer), the "Postscript" nevertheless defines the logic [*logique*] of software [*logiciel*] as relating to technology in general, not simply the synthesizer as a musical instrument. The synthesizer thus does not exclusively deal with music; it is an expression of how we organize ourselves into systems and languages: either in an analogical or binary way. Deleuze writes in the "Postscript,"

The different internments or spaces of enclosure through which the individual passes are independent variables: each time one is supposed to start from zero, and although a common language for all these places exists, it is *analogical*. On the other hand, the different control mechanisms are inseparable variations, forming a system of variable geometry the language of which is *numerical* [Galloway translation: *digital*] (which doesn't necessarily mean binary). Enclosures are *molds*, distinct castings but controls are a *modulation*, like a self-deforming cast that will continuously change from one moment to the other, or like a sieve whose mesh will transmute from point to point.<sup>23</sup>

Deleuze's point is that where the analogical establishes an immediate connection that is unfiltered by homogenous rules, regulations, and codes, the digital is grounded in structures of division—be it through binaries, oppositions, or stable identities: precisely what Bacon's art and Artaud's language escapes to get to the heart of sensation. In an interesting comparison, Galloway parenthetically notes that we "can begin to see why the fields of post-structuralism, deconstruction, hermeneutics, and semiotics are so inherently digital; as a rule

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<sup>23</sup> Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control," in *October*, vol. 59. (1992), 4.

they prohibit immediacy.” And in contrast, we must stress that Deleuze’s aesthetics of painting is analogical for it harnesses the unmediated powers of experience. Arguably, when it comes to music we are dealing with a digital media for, as we shall soon see, Deleuze defines music by its relation to territories and refrains—the former a structure of division, the latter one of deferral, say, between harmonic and melodic changes.

Claire Colebrook recognizes just this in her interpretation of Deleuze’s *Logic of Sensation*. Employing the language of the analog and the digital, Colebrook states that the distinction is not so much a musical one as it is a “problem of art *in general*.”<sup>24</sup> However, in Deleuze’s mind, it still seems to be the musical synthesizer that elucidates what exactly is going on in Bacon’s painting. She claims that art that does more than repeat the history of Western aesthetics taps into an analogical force. As Colebrook effectively distinguishes in her commentary on Deleuze’s distinction between the analog and the digital: “The analog synthesizer begins from the sounds of the world and introduces further variation, releasing the potentialities for difference and becoming in given matters. Digital synthesizers operate from formal units that are then composed and combined to create varying sounds.”<sup>25</sup> What all art shares is this battle between the countable (digital) and the immediate, unformed sensation (analog).

It would not be far off to claim that, much as Deleuze’s philosophy follows Friedrich Nietzsche’s “reversal” of Platonism, Deleuze’s aesthetics inherits the Nietzschean strife between the Apollonian and the Dionysian.<sup>26</sup> To do this inheritance justice, I shall turn to music to explain how Deleuze interprets this battle—it was after all music for Nietzsche that signified this battle more than any other art form. From Nietzsche’s Apollonian and

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<sup>24</sup> Claire Colebrook, *Blake, Deleuzian Aesthetics, the Digital* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2012), xxiv.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, xxvii.

<sup>26</sup> Gilles Deleuze, “The Simulacrum and Ancient Philosophy,” in *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester and Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990) 253.

Dionysian to Pierre Boulez's pulsed and non-pulsed time, we gain insight into Deleuze's interpretation of these cosmic forces that define the aesthetic function of music. After this, the remainder of this chapter will continue to explain, through Deleuze's overall aesthetic model as found in *The Logic of Sensation* and *What is Philosophy?*, how each of the arts speaks with and for its other. This is to say, how we can use music or painting to explain literature, how we might make ourselves into a Body without Organs so as to *see* music or *hear* painting.

~ DELEUZE AFTER NIETZSCHE ~

Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* gives us a vision of the arts as a struggle between the forces of Apollo and Dionysus. Where the former is the god of reason, a purveyor of form, measure, statuesque control and indifference, the latter is the god of wine, bacchanal affirmation, a passion-filled primal unity between contradictory essences: man and woman, divine and human. As Deleuze nicely puts it in *Nietzsche & Philosophy*, "Apollo is the divine incarnation of the principle of individuation. He constructs the appearance of appearance, the beautiful appearance, the dream or plastic image . . . [and] Dionysus, on the contrary, returns to primitive unity, he shatters the individual, drags him into the great shipwreck and absorbs him into original being."<sup>27</sup> While Nietzsche himself would tinker with the opposition between the Apollonian and the Dionysian, nauseated by its dialectical undertone and how it "smells offensively Hegelian," as he says in *Ecce Homo*, following Deleuze we can attempt to save the opposition by seeing these forces not as antithetical but as divergent solutions to the problem of suffering as understood by the ancient Athenians.<sup>28</sup>

To wit in classic Deleuzian fashion, with a foot in the philosophy of the virtual and another in evolutionary biology, the Apollonian and the Dionysian are each actual solutions

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<sup>27</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche & Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 11.

<sup>28</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, quoted in Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche & Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 11.

to the virtual problem of suffering. Just as the gills of a fish and the nose of a primate are both solutions to the problem of taking in oxygen, so too might we see the Apollonian and Dionysian as having equal stakes in their capacity to solve suffering. It would of course be nonsense to read the fish and primate as in dialectical opposition. Nietzsche feared that the Apollonian and the Dionysian conveyed a sense of dialectical negation. The trap, the seduction of viewing them dialectically, is that they require each other. They coexist as forces in any creative act. The artist feels both drives and appreciates the mutual dependence of the Apollonian and Dionysian to create a work of art. Yet as Deleuze argues quite convincingly,

Dionysus and Apollo are . . . not opposed as the terms of a contradiction but rather as two antithetical ways of resolving [suffering]; Apollo mediately, in the contemplation of the plastic image, Dionysus immediately in the reproduction, in the musical symbol of the will. Dionysus is like the background on which Apollo embroiders beautiful appearances; but beneath Apollo Dionysus rumbles. The antithesis of the two must therefore be resolved, ‘transformed into unity.’”<sup>29</sup>

How Deleuze reads Apollo as a mediating force and Dionysus as an immediate one is a concept we are already quite familiar with for its manifestation in Deleuze’s aesthetic strife between sensations that act directly on the body and those that pass through reason, form, and pre-given images. From the analog against the digital, to the body before an image of thought emerges, here in Deleuze’s *Nietzsche & Philosophy* we observe how Nietzsche’s interpretation of Apollo and Dionysus evolves into a theory of mediation and art.

Anticipating Deleuze and Guattari’s interpretation of Messiaen and the way music mirrors nature (the original impulses of territory and creation), Deleuze’s encounter with *The Birth of Tragedy* would have already offered up this idea to him. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche writes of “the blissful ecstasy which arises from the innermost ground of man,

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<sup>29</sup> Deleuze, *Nietzsche & Philosophy*, 12.



indeed of nature itself, whenever this breakdown of the *principium individuationis* occurs.”<sup>30</sup> As the “whole of nature is pervaded by lust for life,” the Dionysiac is felt, and therefore it is clear that the creative potential of existence (nature) is repeated to us in the dithyramb and what Nietzsche sees as its modern analogues (primarily the work of Wagner).<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, in a line that very much anticipates the schizophrenic capacity for music observed in *The Logic of Sensation*—namely its ability to leave behind the inertia of bodies—Nietzsche refers to music as “the imageless art.”<sup>32</sup> As Deleuze interprets music, it has a “galloping schizophrenia” which moves beyond actualized bodies and toward the virtual realm of pure thought.<sup>33</sup> Insofar as music is not tied to an image, to the actualized Ideas and forms we encounter in the world and which sculpture as the art of Apollo the “image-maker” cannot reach, music resembles the immaterial, raw potential of pure thought.<sup>34</sup> This somewhat clarifies Deleuze’s claim about the “superiority of music.”<sup>35</sup> My conclusion shall return to this. What matters at this stage is the affinity between Nietzsche’s claim that music is imageless and mirrors the creative force of nature. As we now examine, Deleuze also finds these Dionysian drives of a measureless art in the work of Pierre Boulez.

~BOULEZ TEACHES US TO COUNT~

The theory and practice of French writer and composer, Pierre Boulez, provides Deleuze with another perspective on this tension between Apollo and Dionysus, this time through metric and free form music. An overview of Deleuze’s engagement with Boulez will aid in understanding Deleuze’s aesthetics as well as uncover the key elements of music that differentiate it from painting. This will further entrench the two poles of aesthetics I see in

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<sup>30</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, ed. Raymond Geuss and Ronald Speirs, trans. Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 17.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>33</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 47.

<sup>34</sup> Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 14.

<sup>35</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 47.

Deleuze's thought between painting and music and the way in which each uniquely expresses this battle between form and chaos.

Deleuze has written extensively on Boulez, from direct praise for his orchestral technique in *A Thousand Plateaus* to more nuanced, philosophical interpretations of his use of sound in his essay, "Making Inaudible Forces Audible," and of time in "Occupy Without Counting: Boulez, Proust and Time." While these three works do not exhaust the Deleuze-Boulez connection, they contain the fundamental frequencies necessary to appreciate Boulez's effect on Deleuze's aesthetics. As will also be expanded on in the second half of this chapter, Deleuze's interpretation of Boulez sheds light on how Deleuze uses music theory to understand Proust and *vice versa*. In Deleuze's thinking, reading Proust musically is one among a numerous set of analogies where the arts are used to explain one another. It is thus valuable not only to focus on the disjunctions in his aesthetics (painting and music), but also how distinct art forms conjugate and then communicate with one another (e.g., music explaining Proust).

To launch us first into a discussion of Boulez, there is an interesting way in which he has already snuck into this chapter so far: the synthesizer. As Martin Scherzinger picks up on, in Deleuze and Guattari's writing, "the philosophical figure of the synthesizer derives its argument less from the actual instrument . . . than it does from Boulez's writings on musical modernism nearly two decades earlier."<sup>36</sup> For Boulez, the idea of the synthesizer was like a set of "conjugations of existent instruments"—its strength lay in "assembling modules, source elements, and elements for treating sound (oscillators, generators, transformers), by arranging microintervals, the synthesizer makes audible the sound process itself . . . and puts

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<sup>36</sup> Martin Scherzinger, "Musical Modernism in the Thought of *Mille Plateaux*, and Its Twofold Politics," 136.

us in contact with still other elements beyond sound matter.”<sup>37</sup> The synthesizer Boulez imagines would fulfill new conjugations in sound as well as composition, conjugations achievable based on our willingness to “address ourselves to the machine.”<sup>38</sup> The synthesizer is a tool for becoming-other, and particularly in its capacity to achieve what the human hand alone cannot, it reconceptualizes notions of agency, authorship, and quite simply music (which now seems to teeter on the brink of sound beyond obvious signs of harmony and melody).

The synthesizer is a real emblem of modernism, with its power of conjunction<sup>39</sup>—“a logic of the AND”—much like the conceptual work of Deleuze and Guattari.<sup>40</sup> Their rhizome is to biology what the synthesizer is to technology. As far as the concepts that Deleuze wracked his brain over in developing the musical side of his aesthetics, one can sense how much an effect Boulez’s synthesizer had on Deleuze as a contemporary case study and theoretician. While Deleuze’s list of contemporary influences usually reads something like Guattari, Foucault, Sartre, Canguilhem, Hyppolite, Alquié, Gandillac, and then Klossowski as the artist of the group, it is a mistake to elide the conceptual influence that exists between Boulez and Deleuze. Two essays in *Two Regimes of Madness* unveil this kinship while giving us a more intense understanding of Deleuze’s aesthetics, music in particular. While unpacking these essays, I also voyage to *A Thousand Plateaus* to fill in the gaps on Deleuze’s thought on music, though we should note that what we find there is arguably

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<sup>37</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 343.

<sup>38</sup> Pierre Boulez, *Notes on an Apprenticeship*, trans. Herbert Weinstock (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), 213.

<sup>39</sup> Admittedly, there is a critical difference between the terms, conjugation and conjunction, in Deleuze and Guattari’s thinking, although they read Boulez’s use of conjugation as in line with how they use conjunction. Where conjugation pertains to derivations and hierarchies, conjunction deals with connections, the latter of which Boulez is getting at.

<sup>40</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 25.

more of Guattari's contribution (if we can entertain a dismemberment of the authors' "two-handed writing" in this case).<sup>41</sup>

The first text under examination is "Making Inaudible Forces Audible," whose title alone echoes a trope throughout Deleuze's writing. Painting is said to make invisible forces visible, and one could even say that Deleuze's transcendental empiricism, which contends that the abstract does not explain but must itself be explained, is committed to another kind of visibility, this time to the reality of the sensible over the priority of transcendent Ideas (in Plato, Descartes). We can interpret this as a kind of re-territorialization wherein the abstract is made concrete, or the untouchable capable of being felt. And if this is the case, let us not forget the de-territorialization that also occurs, this time with the sonorous becoming inaudible or the visible fading from view. For example, the erasure of faces in Bacon's art brings into view deep concepts like aging and time, while making invisible, for one, the separation between the human and the animal. To say that Deleuze is only interested in a materialism where all sensation lies out in the open would be to overlook the way re-territorialization and de-territorialization are part and parcel of the same process. With this caveat in mind, I turn to Deleuze's essay on Boulez.

"Making Inaudible Forces Audible" introduces us to the distinction between pulsed and non-pulsed rhythms. Drawing from biological examples such as the circadian rhythm, Deleuze inquires into the broader metric repetitions that inform our daily lives. By this he means the commonalities, habits, and continuities that inform our sense of subjectivity. As Locke famously states, memory is the guiding thread to our sense of self, and the stability of the self is one of the most unshakable 'rhythms' in our lives. Deleuze, as is often the case, probes into the molecular forces of the self and extracts the notion of the machinic

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<sup>41</sup> Anna Sauvanargues, *Deleuze and Art*, trans. Samantha Bankston (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 6.

assemblage. Likewise, in “Making Inaudible Forces Audible” he applies a similar gesture to music. In other words, does music need some, *any*, kind of rhythm to be music? If rhythm is not necessary, what then is this non-pulsed time? This is a question perhaps better answered in the following discussion on “Occupying Without Counting,” though Deleuze’s reference to it in this first essay calls for at least some explanation now.

The idea of a non-pulsed time is clear enough, though its achievability is far more complicated. As for a working definition of it, let us refer to non-pulsed time as a “kind of floating time that more or less corresponds to what Proust called ‘a bit of pure time.’”<sup>42</sup> This is to say, freed from measure, we enter into time without “common measure or a metric cadence.” In “Making Inaudible Forces Audible,” Deleuze addresses directly the five works picked for discussion at Boulez’s IRCAM seminar where Deleuze’s paper was presented. The five are Ligeti’s *Chamber Concerto*, Messiaen’s *Mode de valeurs et d’intensités*, Boulez’s *Éclat*, and Stockhausen’s *Zeitmasse*, which stand as examples of this non-pulsed time, and Carter’s *A Mirror on which to Dwell*, which “could lead to a new form of original pulsation.”<sup>43</sup> Listening to these examples may well convince us what this non-pulsed time is, and for Deleuze this is because they tap into the musical equivalent of “a certain type of individuation that is not reduced to a subject (I) or even a combination of a form and a material.”<sup>44</sup> The dissolution of the subject (I) shoots across Deleuze’s aesthetic studies, and in music this appears to be the capacity to tap into something beyond metre. To use a distinction that informs Deleuze’s writing from *The Logic of Sense* well throughout *A Thousand Plateaus*, the difference between pulsed and non-pulsed, subject and assemblage, is also the difference between the time of Chronos and Aion (*Aeon*). Framing it in these terms is the most effective analogue to

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<sup>42</sup> Gilles Deleuze, “Making Inaudible Forces Audible,” in *Two Regimes of Madness*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (South Pasadena: Semiotext(e), 2007), 157.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 156-7.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

understanding music, which after all is, along with cinema, at the apex of art's ability to represent time and for us to feel it both chronologically and non-chronologically. This is also one of the key temptations driving Deleuze to conceive of Proust in musical terms—with his mastery over the senses of *durée*, that is, how time speeds and slows in the wake of consciousness as Bergson puts it.

Where Chronos is “the time of measure that situates things and persons, develops a form, and determines a subject” Aion is raw potential, a future yet to come and a past waiting to pass. For example, Proust’s madeleine does not evoke the Combray of the past but “Combray like it never was, is, or will be lived.”<sup>45</sup> Thus it is “the indefinite time of the event, the floating line that knows only speeds.”<sup>46</sup> To hijack the discussion of “Making Inaudible Forces Audible,” in *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari bring this directly in relation to Boulez. They write, “Boulez distinguishes tempo and nontempo in music: the ‘pulsed time’ of a formal and functional music based on values versus the ‘nonpulsed time’ of a floating music, both floating *and* machinic, which has nothing but speeds or differences in dynamic.”<sup>47</sup> When music like the synthesizer offers us modulations and speeds more than forms and repetitions, we begin to feel the nomadic potential of sound characterized by non-pulses and the subjectivity of Aion. To leave this all for a short while, which will be further explored in relation to “Occupy Without Counting,” there is an important second movement (to use a musical term deliberately) to Deleuze’s “Making Inaudible Forces Audible” and it deals less closely with time *per se*, which was the focus on Boulez’s seminar, and shifts to a discussion of how the arts communicate with one another. How an art form

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<sup>45</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy*, 168.

<sup>46</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 262.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 262.

evokes the image of another form, and furthermore what they end up sharing and saying about one another, is something Deleuze turns to explicitly.

For Deleuze, as for Proust, the power of music is how it evokes more than just sound. On the one hand, there is in this claim an appreciation for how the whole body—and not just our ears—is used to apprehend music. Our bones and the vibrations on our nervous system play a fundamental role especially in interpreting low frequencies. Yet on the other hand, music evokes images, places, and other art forms, such that music might *feel* like a painting. Deleuze says, “a piece of music can remind us of a landscape . . . Sounds can also evoke colors, either by association or by so-called synaesthetic phenomena. Motifs in operas can finally be connected to people, for example: a Wagnerian motif is supposed to designate a character.”<sup>48</sup> As he then adds, the overlapping experiences in these three examples generates “*sound landscapes, audible colors, and rhythmic character*,” respectively, and all are ways of entering us into “non-pulsed floating time.”<sup>49</sup> The watershed moment in this instance is that, as Deleuze argues, non-pulsed time and the underlying synaesthesia of the arts are not two distinct processes but entirely connected in aesthetic experience.

When music participates in a kind of becoming-painting brought on by its evocation of colours, Deleuze claims that this overlapping of presents is emblematic of non-pulsed time, the time of Aion. It is not the time of Chronos with interlocking presents stretching back to the past and forward to the future. It is that of Aion, as each present holds the contraction of a future yet to come and a past still not previous. Likewise the contraction of colour in music enters us into this infinite plane of Aion. Rather than concrete, Aion is characterized by its infinite capacity to be subdivided and from this, in the case of sound, comes “*sound landscapes, audible colors . . . rhythmic character*” and we can intuit that this list must

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<sup>48</sup> Deleuze, “Making Inaudible Forces Audible,” 158-9.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.

go on.<sup>50</sup> To experience this continuum, this plane of consistency between something like colour and sound, is to experience art as event—namely, the unformed, infinite becoming of Aion. The Dionysian in Nietzsche’s aesthetics plunges into just the same force, and we can confidently add that Boulez’s non-pulsed time does too. But in Deleuze’s thought, these have been updated in terms of the Stoic conception of Aion and the Bergsonian philosophy of the virtual.

To fill in certain gaps that remain in properly articulating these aspects of Deleuze’s aesthetics, I now switch over to the second essay on Boulez, “Occupy Without Counting.” On top of further explaining pulsed and non-pulsed time, the essay shows how music represents time in its purest state, how it renders time perceptible, and finally touches on what Deleuze calls the multiplicity of time in the work of Boulez and Proust. First, to grasp pulsed and non-pulsed time more fully, what “Occupy Without Counting” raises as a helpful point is Boulez’s indebtedness to Messiaen. In Deleuze and Guattari’s work, Messiaen’s most notable appearance comes in Plateau 11: Of the Refrain from *A Thousand Plateaus*, a far more frequented text than the essays found in *Two Regimes of Madness*. There in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari outline Messiaen’s distinction between metre and rhythm. The former is repeatable and uniform, whereas the latter “scorns repetition, squareness, and equal divisions, and . . . is inspired by the movements of nature, movements of free and unequal durations.”<sup>51</sup> For Messiaen nature accomplishes what we have thus far been told by Boulez the synthesizer and technology does. Thus, while each approaches it from a different direction, their definitions of rhythm and non-pulsed time are near identical and should be read as one and the same theory—Boulez as an extension of Messiaen. Explaining Messiaen,

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<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Claude Samuel, *Olivier Messiaen: Music and Color: Conversations with Claude Samuel*, trans. E. Thomas Glasgow (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1994), 67.



as Deleuze himself does to account for Boulez, will give us what is needed to understand non-pulsed time.

As we learn in *A Thousand Plateaus*, what differentiates rhythm from metre is its unpredictability. It functions with speed and slowness and follows a nomadic distribution of time. This music constantly gets away from itself; there is rarely a moment of pure return—although there are certainly cuts that circle back, which Deleuze and Guattari call the motif. In discussing the way in which music harnesses repetitions and non-pulsed time, Deleuze and Guattari distinguish three musical epochs: Classicism, Romanticism, and Modernism. They do not seek to concretize these art forms nor create a general historical narrative among them—they are postmodernists after all—but they bring them forward to address general tendencies and divergences between the eras. Inherited from Messiaen, Deleuze and Guattari differentiate the “milieu” of Classicism,” from the “territory” of Romanticism, from the “cosmos” of Modernism. Allow me to define these terms.

In his “Notes on the Translation” of *A Thousand Plateaus*, Brian Massumi defines milieu as follows: “In French, *milieu* means ‘surroundings,’ ‘medium’ (as in chemistry) and ‘middle.’ In the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari ‘milieu’ should be read as a technical term combining all three meanings.”<sup>52</sup> A milieu, then, is much like a world. For example, the milieu of the tick has three things according to Deleuze and Guattari (following Jakob von Uexküll): the perception of light that allows it to find the extremity of a branch; the smell of butyric acid in its prey; and the tactile ability to burrow itself in the best place on its prey.<sup>53</sup> Together, these amount to the milieu of the tick, and one of the central questions for Messiaen as for Deleuze and Guattari is at what point this milieu becomes a rhythm or a territory—two very divergent evolutionary processes.

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<sup>52</sup> Brian Massumi, “Notes on the Translation,” in *A Thousand Plateaus*, xvii.

<sup>53</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 257.

As for rhythm, and just as before with Boulez, it refers to vibrations of speed rather than uniform metre. We can understand it as the process of two milieus coming together. While, for example, the spider's web and the fly's wings and their fluttering speed follow distinct metric orders, the product created by them coming together—the becoming-web of the fly, the becoming-fly of the web—is without this same organization. For Deleuze and Guattari, it is instead a non-organic process—a predatory one—but there are ones akin to a more symbiotic relation like between the wasp and the orchid. The wasp ends up playing a role in the orchid's reproduction system because the wasp thinks the orchid looks like a female wasp, and the orchid happens to give nutrition to the wasp. While Deleuze and Guattari call this an example of a parallel evolution, it is equally so one of rhythm as defined by Messiaen.

Thus far we have spoken to milieu and rhythm, which are both distinct from territory. Unlike milieu and rhythm, which are still wrapped up in a world of function, territory is said to be purely *expressive*. Bird songs represent this expression to the fullest. At first serving the function of courting—and so subject to the internal and external necessities of reproduction and attraction—something completely different occurs when the male bird starts to sing in the absence of its female counterpart. It may begin to whistle the sounds of its environment, cutting itself out a territory, a little block secured from the chaos of the natural world as a child does when humming in the dark.<sup>54</sup> Or the bird may simply speak the language of the world for no reason in particular, simply for the inherent beauty of mimicking its surroundings. This is expression beyond function. It is also, for Deleuze and Guattari, proof of an aesthetic tendency in animals and what they see as the autonomy of art, or art for its own sake. Again, Deleuze and Guattari follow suit on Nietzsche, for whom the

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<sup>54</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 311

Apollonian and Dionysian spring from all of nature and not just the human alone. In one of their most important claims, Deleuze and Guattari assert that art “[does] not wait for human beings to begin.”<sup>55</sup> The territory in its priority of expression over function, moves us one step closer to the cosmic chaos that lies beyond our small worlds. Remember, as was the case for Francis Bacon, that form and faciality should be methods for getting beyond such parameters, not re-entrenching them, so that we can handle and appreciate the emergence of chaos. Pure chaos gives us nothing; yet to experience it on the border of form-matter and nomadic speed is in fact to render perceptible the imperceptible (of chaos in this case, and this line between the two I read as defining the cosmos in Deleuze and Guattari’s thought).

The origin of the concept of territory in Guattari’s thinking in particular explains a substantial amount with regard to its appearance in “Of the Refrain” and its relation to non-pulsed, free-floating time. As Ronald Bogue observes in *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, “Guattari’s use of territorialization was originally used to refer to Lacan’s idea of the investment of the infant’s libido into erogenous and nonerogenous zones—a move away from the free-floating polymorphous perversity.”<sup>56</sup> To unravel these concepts would get us too far from the task at hand, but I ask my reader to notice how territory and “free-floating” desire stand in relation to one another. The child’s experience of desire beyond the normalized constraints of the genitals, which are seen as *the* erogenous zone, mirrors how Messiaen and Boulez create music where our normalized categories may interpret merely sound. They reshape the boundaries of our perception, and this is precisely the goal of art for Deleuze.

Lastly, there is the cosmos. The terms cosmos and chaos act somewhat interchangeably, and while there is certainly a difference between them for Deleuze and

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 320.

<sup>56</sup> Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 56.

Guattari, allow me to offer a brief illustration of their relationship by way of the Pythagoreans. For Pythagoras and his followers, the cosmos has a mathematical order of intervals that rings out in musical harmony. As Michael Gallope explains in *Deep Refrains: Music, Philosophy, and the Ineffable*, this serves as a helpful image in understanding Deleuze and Guattari's reading of music and the cosmos. For Deleuze and Guattari, unlike the Pythagoreans, "the structure of the cosmos," while certainly musical in how it plays with intervals and rhythms, speeds and slowness, "is no longer based in the eternity of whole-number ratios, and is no longer harmonic, static, or universal."<sup>57</sup> There is still a cosmos and still one of musical relations, though one grounded on a metaphysics "of interlocking counterpoints . . . difference, disjunction, and syncopated rhythms."<sup>58</sup>

Unlike a milieu or territory, the achievement of the cosmos is to render perceptible what is unthinkable. There is a certain primal truth to this—for the cosmos has always signified the impossibility of something coming out of nothing, time out of eternity, consciousness out of brute matter. The cosmos equally so marks the final break from a form-matter conception of being. As signified by quantum mechanics, stable entities become molecular intensities which are subject to force—of acting and being acted upon. We can no longer speak of milieus (earth), "which still constitute a great expressive Form, but [only] the forces of an immaterial, nonformal, and energetic Cosmos."<sup>59</sup> But of course this cosmos cannot be understood directly; we need to add some "consistency or consolidation" so that the unformed force it contains can actually be received. The central difficulty of all art is to find out "how to consolidate the material, make it consistent, so that it can harness

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<sup>57</sup> Michael Gallope, *Deep Refrains: Music, Philosophy, and the Ineffable* (United States of America: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 219.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 343.

unthinkable, invisible, nonsonorous forces.”<sup>60</sup> With milieu, territory, and cosmos now defined, let us explain the epochs Deleuze and Guattari relate them to.

In Classicism, the world is understood according to a “form-matter relation, or rather a form-substance relation (substance is precisely a matter endowed with form).”<sup>61</sup> Everything has its form, which is also to say that everything has its milieu. Yet while everything has its form, working according to a binary and hierarchy, there is an underlying power that Classicism uncovers: the power of rhythm, or that which happens when we pass across or conjoin distinct milieus. From these combinations, an artist “breaks down the milieus, separates them, harmonizes them, regulates their mixtures, passes from one to the other.”<sup>62</sup> For Deleuze and Guattari, the artist realizes something maddening in this process, namely, that form is *imposed* on matter and that matter is originally “raw and untamed.”<sup>63</sup> Like a god, the classical artist adds milieu upon milieu to their work. First there might only be a piano (a bird), then answered by a violin “from a neighbouring tree.”<sup>64</sup> The artist plays through the process of creation, imposing order onto sound.

Then comes Romanticism; “everything is clearly different.”<sup>65</sup> The artist no longer participates in God’s creation, but finds joy in “the ground or foundation,” the act of founding a territory set apart from original creation. As Deleuze and Guattari state,

“[t]he artist is no longer God but the Hero who defies God: Found, Found, Found, instead of Create. Faust, especially the second Faust, is impelled by this tendency. Criticism, the Protestantism of the earth, replaces dogmatism, the Catholicism of the milieus (code).”<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 338.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 339.

Unlike the Classical artist, the Romantic is committed to a continuous form of creation. Territories begin to vary, forms are far more difficult to uphold unlike the ideal creation of Classicism. The perfection of creation overtop of chaos is not given, as in Classicism, but rather traced and retraced in light of the unending variation of the earth. This is why the Romantic hero is a wanderer and why, to use Paul Klee's formula, "the people is what is missing." Since territories are purely *expressive* not *ideal*, the hero acts in the face of a stable order they do not actually trust in or seek to uphold—they defy God's order like Faust or Prometheus. Think, for example, of Beethoven's unforgettable "Symphony No. 5 in C Minor," which intentionally depicts a hero's journey not only in its grandiosity but also in its chosen key. Beethoven and later composers would reserve C minor for pieces they wanted to present a heroic tale, and this tale is specifically one of individual resistance, creation, and triumph. Finally, if in Classical art chaos exists *between* formed substances, in Romanticism it starts to enter into these forms and spark continuous variation. This spurs Faust's dissatisfaction with his place in the eternal order, his choice to make earth his heaven despite this reward being entirely temporary.

As might be expected, Deleuze and Guattari characterize Modernism by its continued deterritorialization from the form-matter relation, and the introduction of what they call the refrain, which launches us out onto the chaos of the cosmos. The Modern artist's concern is not to work among forms and territories—not to create or establish with clear and distinct boundaries—but to work on a molecular level with imperceptible forces. When Deleuze and Guattari discuss Messiaen's notion of rhythm, they have in mind the forces of the cosmos and the artist's ability to render them perceptible. Time is the central force for musicians to render perceptible and Modern composers address the unique speed and slowness that time can possess. Modernism addresses a central truth of Einstein's theory

of relativity and functions in terms of “additions and withdrawals, amplifications and eliminations by unequal values.”<sup>67</sup> There are always “different times” according to Proust, and Modern art wants us to feel these shifts.<sup>68</sup> In the words of Messiaen, a composer must think in terms of time-scales and must generate new ones. There is,

the endlessly long time of the stars, the very long time of the mountains, the middling one of the human being, the short time of insects, the very short one of atoms (not to mention the time-scales inherent in ourselves—the physiological, the psychological) . . . [The composer] by means of his rhythms . . . can chop up Time here and there, and can even put it together again in the reverse order, as though he were going for a walk through different points in time, or as though he were amassing the future by turning to the past, in the past of which, his memory of the past becomes transformed into a memory of the future.<sup>69</sup>

Messiaen’s discussion of rhythm and the Modern artists “walk through different points in time” launches us into the elements in Proust that Deleuze is convinced speak a musical language. He addresses this directly in “Occupy Without Counting,” which is also where the above summary of milieu, territory, and cosmos in Messiaen has been leading us.

What Deleuze notices in Boulez and Proust—something Boulez himself had spotted in Proust and wanted to recreate—was the way motifs detached themselves from places, people, or, put simply, individuated forms. While repetition compulsions and the power of memory are at the heart of Proust’s work, what Deleuze and Boulez argue is that to focus on these elements misses the continuous variation that signs and sounds can take on as they escape from the “characters, places and names to which they are first attached.”<sup>70</sup> This is the potential for variation, for seeing something anew, which is the power of aesthetics.

Instead of stable identities, we receive virtual intensities as synaptic connections bifurcate onto unforeseen pathways. In Proust’s work, for example, “the successive loves,

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<sup>67</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 348-9.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 349.

<sup>69</sup> Almut Rößler and Olivier Messiaen, *Contributions to the spiritual world of Olivier Messiaen: with original texts by the composer* (Duisburg, West Germany: Gilles & Francke, 1986), 40-1.

<sup>70</sup> Gilles Deleuze, “Occupy without Counting: Boulez, Proust and Time,” in *Two Regimes of Madness*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (South Pasadena: Semiotext(e), 2007), 297.

jealousies, slumbers, etc., all detach from the characters so well that they themselves become infinitely changing characters, individuations without identity, Jealousy I, Jealousy II, Jealousy III...”<sup>71</sup> There is a “musical composition” in Proust, as lovers vibrate at different frequencies, occupying durations of speed and slowness.<sup>72</sup> Characters take on melodic and harmonic differences between one another, but follow a rhythm rather than a pre-determined metre. As Deleuze says, there are only ever “distances and proximities” between the characters.<sup>73</sup> The logic of Proust is what Deleuze calls musical “perception”—not memory, not even when memory is involuntary. The *Search*, just like Boulez’s compositions, deals with Time in all its immaterial and imperceptible splendour. Their shared aesthetic achievement is to have “given sound to the mute forces of time.”<sup>74</sup>

~ AESTHETIC CONJUGATIONS ~

Now that the affinity between Proust and music—specifically Modern composers like Boulez and how they occupy time—has begun to come into view, let us examine another key analogue between artistic media, this time that of painting and writing. Recall that where a significant amount of explanations and descriptions of Proust’s work resort to music, in painting and Deleuze’s commentary on Francis Bacon, we are given conceptions of language and concepts from literature to help explain what is occurring on his canvas. Following Walter Benjamin’s conviction that the artist must approach their work from a point that crosses media, so that they may access a certain unknown truth about their creation, it is apparent that literature is Deleuze’s way of accessing painting, just as it was in turn music that illuminated Proust’s writing.

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<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 298.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 299.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 303.



After the publication of *The Logic of Sensation*, Deleuze gave an interview with Hervé Guibert entitled “Painting Sets Writing Ablaze.” In their conversation, Guibert probes Deleuze on this aesthetic affinity between painting and literature. He asks, “*you establish a link between Kafka’s characters and those in Bacon. Writing about Bacon after writing about Sacher-Masoch, Proust and then Kafka, isn’t there also a connection?*”<sup>75</sup> Deleuze is rather equivocal in his response at first, explaining how each artist deals with Figures—the figural as opposed to the figurative. In Bacon, these are the “economical” bodily contortions that seem tortuous but are nothing more than the “natural postures” we take on over time—“someone who is forced to sit for a long time, like a child at school.”<sup>76</sup> Such Manneristic movements exemplify what Deleuze calls the “violence of the poses” as opposed to the “violence of the situations.”<sup>77</sup> Yet still, we already know this about Bacon from *The Logic of Sensation*, and what is less clear is the *particular* similarities in these “figural” movements found in painting and literature. Deleuze seems to think there is one, although he does not speak directly to it here.

It is a frustrating moment considering how prevalent the theme is in Deleuze’s writing, although credit to Guibert for being, as far as I know, one of the first to hint at this intimate connection between painting and literature in Deleuze’s work. Would that Deleuze have spoken more to the linguistic affinity between Sacher-Masoch and Bacon, as well as the aesthetic problem of perspective that diverges between Bacon and Proust, and finally what literature in particular adds to how we write criticism about painting, all would become clear for us. However perhaps I should thank Deleuze for equivocating in this moment, for otherwise my project would have already been answered.

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<sup>75</sup> Gilles Deleuze, “Painting Sets Writing Ablaze,” in *Two Regimes of Madness*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina (South Pasadena: Semiotext(e), 2007), 181.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 182.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

In “Painting Sets Writing Ablaze,” however, Deleuze does not leave us entirely hanging out to dry. Addressing Deleuze’s critical style in writing about painting, Guibert asks “*How do you write a book on painting? By calling on things or beings of literature, in this case Kafka, Proust, Beckett?*”<sup>78</sup> Again Deleuze could have been clearer, though this time he gives us more to work with. Re-emphasizing that painting deals with lines and colours, Deleuze then claims that lines—the rhythms of sentences, the calligraphy of words, almost like the brute material of letters à la Artaud the schizophrenic—are enveloped in the world of literature and painting. As Thomas Lamarre observes, “Deleuze’s logic of sensation often resonates eerily with many of the traditional Japanese and Chinese treatises on calligraphy and poetry.”<sup>79</sup> What literature and painting explain in one another is this construction and deconstruction of sense as words and pictures disclose the “pure line” of sensation.

Stepping back, when we realize the relations between the arts and how they can explain one another—literature on painting, music on literature—this nevertheless begs the question as to why music and painting are often contrasted in Deleuze’s writing. As I argued in Chapter II, the way in which Proust-the-musician resists the theory of sensation proposed in Deleuze’s impressionist-modernist theory of painting of *The Logic of Sensation* prompted the discussion here of what is unique to music: its relation to Time, and its ties to the natural world (Messiaen, Boulez). While the former may have been more obvious than the latter, let us not forget that Deleuze and Guattari’s thought on music, indebted as it is to Messiaen and Boulez, is transfixed on the natural world from evolutionary biology, territories, and the cosmos in a way that painting is not. To make a strong generalization close to Ronald Bogue’s in *Deleuze, Painting, and the Arts*, where music turns us outward to the natural world,

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<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Thomas Lamarre, “Diagram, Inscription, Sensation,” in *A Shock to Thought*, ed. Brian Massumi (New York: Routledge, 2002), 169.

painting is about the inner, molecular experience of sensation. The aesthetic experience between painting and music is for Deleuze in part one of the inner bodily experience of painting and the outer spiritual experience of music and the natural world. To suggest, as I have, that Deleuze has constructed two aesthetic models between painting and music is supported by this standoff between sensation and the refrain. Bogue's outline of this impasse is worth quoting at length:

[Deleuze] frequently characterizes the capacities and limitations of music and painting by contrasting the two arts . . . In music, Deleuze finds the key to an understanding of art's relation to the natural world. Through reflection on the elements connecting human music and birdsong, he develops a general theory of animal behavior and evolutionary biology as forms of thematic rhythmic patterning, ultimately extending the musical model to describe the interactions of the natural world as an extended symphony of contrapuntal refrains. Deleuze regards painting as the paradigmatic art of sensation, and hence as the medium that most fully discloses the inner dimension of aesthetic experience. The most carnal of the arts, painting engages the body in a "becoming-other" while disembodying sensation and reincarnating it in a world of apersonal affects and percepts.<sup>80</sup>

The sensation of painting and the rhythms of the refrain therefore stand as the two poles of aesthetic experience, further clarifying the way in which, to echo Deleuze's sentiment in *The Logic of Sensation*, "music begins where painting ends." Aesthetic experience certainly is not exhausted by this distinction, and there are unique contributions from literature and cinema, which in Deleuze's oeuvre are art forms that far exceed music and painting in ink spilled. Literature has contributed to my work in demonstrating how the arts can be used to explain one another (Artaud, Sacher-Masoch, Kafka, and Proust on painting and music), and has clarified most notably the painterly experience of the Body without Organs in feeling a language unmediated by concepts. To explain the unique ways in which cinema makes certain imperceptible forces perceptible, however, would require another project entirely. In my conclusion, I dwell once more on the music-painting dichotomy and return to *Proust and*

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<sup>80</sup> Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, 2.

*Signs* to contemplate the “superiority of music” in its resemblance to pure thought and its ties to a philosophy of the virtual.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Deleuze, *The Logic of Sensation*, 47.

*“But whatever the importance of this process of analogy in art, art does not find its profoundest formula here.”<sup>1</sup>*

### CONCLUSION

#### ~THE TWO POLES~

Having set up Deleuze’s two aesthetic poles of painting and music, and remarked on how their sides (and media that fall in between like literature) can communicate with one another, we are left wondering whether a hierarchy exists among the arts. Naturally, Deleuze uses the two poles pedagogically to show what art is capable of. Furthermore, the distinction helps to unearth the functional merits (such as sensation, erasure, perception, and so on) of particular art forms. As we have examined, where painting is unmatched in disclosing unseen molecular forces, music enters us into infinite modes of time and the rhythms of the natural world. We are also aware that all art finds a way of actualizing invisible forces, making the non-sonorous heard or the imperceptible seen. Art creates new forms in this process of creation, picking up on virtual potentials beyond cliché and representation.

In this way, aesthetics is an ode to the radical potential for creation, for affirming life rather than simply repeating or reacting to it—cardinal sins for any true Nietzschean like Deleuze. Yet we should not mistake the divergent creative accomplishments among the arts as a lack of a hierarchy. In fact, it is hard to forget the moment Deleuze interrupts *The Logic of Sensation* to state not only the *difference* between painting and music, but the “*superiority* of music” [my emphasis].<sup>2</sup> To conclude my work, I weigh the implications of this apparent hierarchy and the reasons Deleuze sets it up. I find that it must have something to do with the capacity for music to pass through bodies, to lose their inertia as Deleuze says, which in other words is to break more freely from actualization and launch out onto the virtual plane.

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<sup>1</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 40.

<sup>2</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 47.

Following Peter Hallward's claim in *Out of this World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation* that aesthetics marks a pivotal step on the way to the immateriality of "pure thought," I examine how music accomplishes this flight, this "galloping schizophrenia" as it were, in ways painting is held back from.<sup>3</sup> By reflecting also on Deleuze's engagement with aesthetics and the process of creation as encountered in *Proust and Signs*, we are able to appreciate what this immateriality, or spirituality (to use a synonym Deleuze frequently does) means for his philosophy. Like no other text, *Proust and Signs* stands as Deleuze's foremost engagement with the intersection of creation, aesthetics, and the immaterial (spiritual).

~ ART AS IMMATERIAL ~

Repeatedly in *Proust and Signs*, Deleuze writes of a spiritual function in art, which pertains to its capacity to include its own meaning within itself. All else in the world is caught up in a process of referents—things refer to other things to explain themselves. But this is not the case for art. In one of the most important statements in *Proust and Signs*, Deleuze recalls,

Proust often speaks of the necessity that weighs upon him: that something always reminds him of or makes him imagine something else. But whatever the importance of this process of analogy in art, art does not find its profoundest formula here. As long as we discover a sign's meaning in something else, matter still subsists, refractory to spirit. On the contrary, art gives us the true unity: unity of an immaterial sign and of an entirely spiritual meaning as it is revealed in the work of art.<sup>4</sup>

This quote matters for two reasons. First, it appears to offer a critique of an analogical conception of the arts, which this thesis has advocated for—and I have used solely Deleuze's commentary and style as proof for the usefulness of analogy. Second, the quote addresses a spiritual fulfillment in art, the likes of which we have only found Deleuze observing in music. Although Deleuze does speak of Francis Bacon attaining a level of

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, 40.

spirit—"a pig-spirit, a buffalo-spirit, a dog-spirit, a bat-spirit"—I read those more as particular molecular forces that assert themselves on the surface of the canvas.<sup>5</sup> They are examples of how Bacon "*dismantle[s] the face*, to rediscover the head or make it emerge from beneath the face,"—all intensities of the body and thus things that disclose "a spirit in bodily form, a corporeal and vital breath, an animal spirit."<sup>6</sup> Deleuze himself states that this becoming-animal on Bacon's canvas "attests to a high *spirituality*, since what leads it to seek the elementary forces beyond the organic is a spiritual will. But this spirituality is a spirituality of the body; the spirit is the body itself, the body without organs."<sup>7</sup> As we have come to see, this is the spirituality of hysteria. In contrast, we are looking for the spirituality of schizophrenia, which Deleuze finds in music and that I argue is also what Deleuze is expressing in *Proust and Signs*.

Deleuze insists on "[t]he superiority of art over life . . . [insofar as] all the signs we meet in life are still material signs, and their meaning, because it is always in something else, is not altogether spiritual."<sup>8</sup> What I think we can read back onto *Proust and Signs*, however, is that some art breaks from "worldly signs" more than others; "sensuous signs are incapable of giving us the essence," Deleuze says.<sup>9</sup> Finally, Deleuze introduces the idea that art is that one thing that enters us into other worlds—a theme we reflected on in Chapter II. He claims that through art and it alone, "substance is spiritualized and physical surroundings dematerialized in order to refract essence, that is, the quality of an original world."<sup>10</sup> Posing it as an "original world" is important, for it allows us to make the connection back to Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* as well as forward to Guattari's notion of territory. The

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<sup>5</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002) 19.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

impossibility of entering into the other worlds of lovers is called into question in the work of art, since for Proust, as for Nietzsche, art dips into a primordial unity by way of the dissolution of the subject and the autogenic nature of creation.

Lastly, while I have examined the superiority of music through Proust (on spirit), it is also the case as I showed in Chapter III that Deleuze would have spotted this in Nietzsche's work. To elaborate, in each of *The Birth of Tragedy*, "Schopenhauer as Educator," and "The Case of Wagner" Nietzsche upholds the superiority of music. In part this is in resistance to a tradition (Hegel, Schelling) that placed epic poetry at the apex of the arts. Beginning with Schopenhauer, however, music received an elevated status and symbolized the Will itself. Music is not some mere copy of an Idea like the other arts. In short, music is the most autonomous art form since, as Schopenhauer argues, its elements do not precede the creative act. Where the colours of paint and the words of poetry pre-exist the work of art to come, the tones of music disclose an aesthetic power directly in the expression of the sound itself. This demonstrates the autonomy of music, and we also know that this possibility of self-sufficiency in art is what Deleuze examines in *Proust and Signs*. Along with its immateriality or spirituality, the superiority of music lies in how it achieves autonomy—the perfect link between sign and referent and its freedom from actualized bodies.

~ PURE THOUGHT ~

Drawing on the work of Peter Hallward, I claim that these ideas of immateriality, of counter-actualizing the world and creating the new, are what attract Deleuze to Proust's aesthetics. As Hallward notes, these facets of aesthetic creation hold a striking resemblance in Deleuze's oeuvre to his philosophy of the virtual and pure thought. As Hallward puts it, "[a]rt doesn't expose truths or realities that would pre-exist it: it makes truth and participates directly in the creation of reality . . . Rather than represent something external to itself, a



work of art is a machine that generates its own reality.”<sup>11</sup> As if picked right out of *Proust and Signs*, Hallward declares that for this reason does art enable “the full spiritualisation or dematerialisation of life.”<sup>12</sup> Finally, Hallward connects this to the philosophy of Henri Bergson, particularly in distinguishing our reflex responses (to the actualized world) from our creative drives (the virtual):

an organism geared toward the present tends simply to react more or less instantaneously and automatically, on the model of a reflex response. The urgency of an actual reaction prevails here to the exclusion of all indetermination and all virtuality (and hence of all creativity, all thought, all reverie, all art...) [whereas] the opposite tendency will tempt the organism to forego all concern for the present and for its actual interests or needs. A contemplative inaction can now prevail over action.<sup>13</sup>

Clearly, Deleuze regards these moves away from dogmatic images of thought as characteristic of the autonomy offered by thinking. We know just how important this is for the work of Francis Bacon and how he wrenches free from cliché. What we have also come to see, however, is that music even more so lifts itself free from the heavy inertia of the actualized world. Music is not tied to bodies; it more so passes through them. Music certainly calls to mind images and actualized things (physical entities), though for Deleuze it can turn away from them and the semiotic systems they are caught up in with far more precision. Hallward beautifully captures this hierarchy between actualized and virtual art forms:

there is already a sort of hierarchy within the arts themselves, depending on the materiality or opacity of the art. It's not only that an art becomes less artistic the more it relies on the creatural norms of representation, figuration, interpretation, and so on: from time to time Deleuze also suggests some arts are less artistic than others, because the medium of their expression is itself more solid or opaque and thus more resistant to counter-actualisation. Architecture, sculpture and dance do not figure prominently in the Deleuzian pantheon of the arts, and it's not surprising that Deleuze should pay more attention to the luminous art of film than to the more corporeal art of the theatre, the art of *représentation* par excellence. For the same

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<sup>11</sup> Peter Hallward, *Out of this World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation* (London: Verso, 2006), 104.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

reason, even in the middle of his book on Bacon, Deleuze is prepared to acknowledge a certain “superiority of music.”<sup>14</sup>

For Deleuze, the potential for thought and the creation of the new rests on an ability to break free from actualization. Aesthetics cannot achieve the level of freedom and autonomous creation that pure thought can, though it arguably stands as the most impactful symbol for demonstrating what creation looks like. We could even say that, for Deleuze, aesthetics renders visible this radical potential for creation embodied by pure thought. Aesthetics will always be burdened by the inertia of bodies, it is more or less always tied to the material plane. Yet how it harnesses chaos, reworks the world, and calls upon a new image of thought, is the critical importance Deleuze recognizes in art.

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.

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